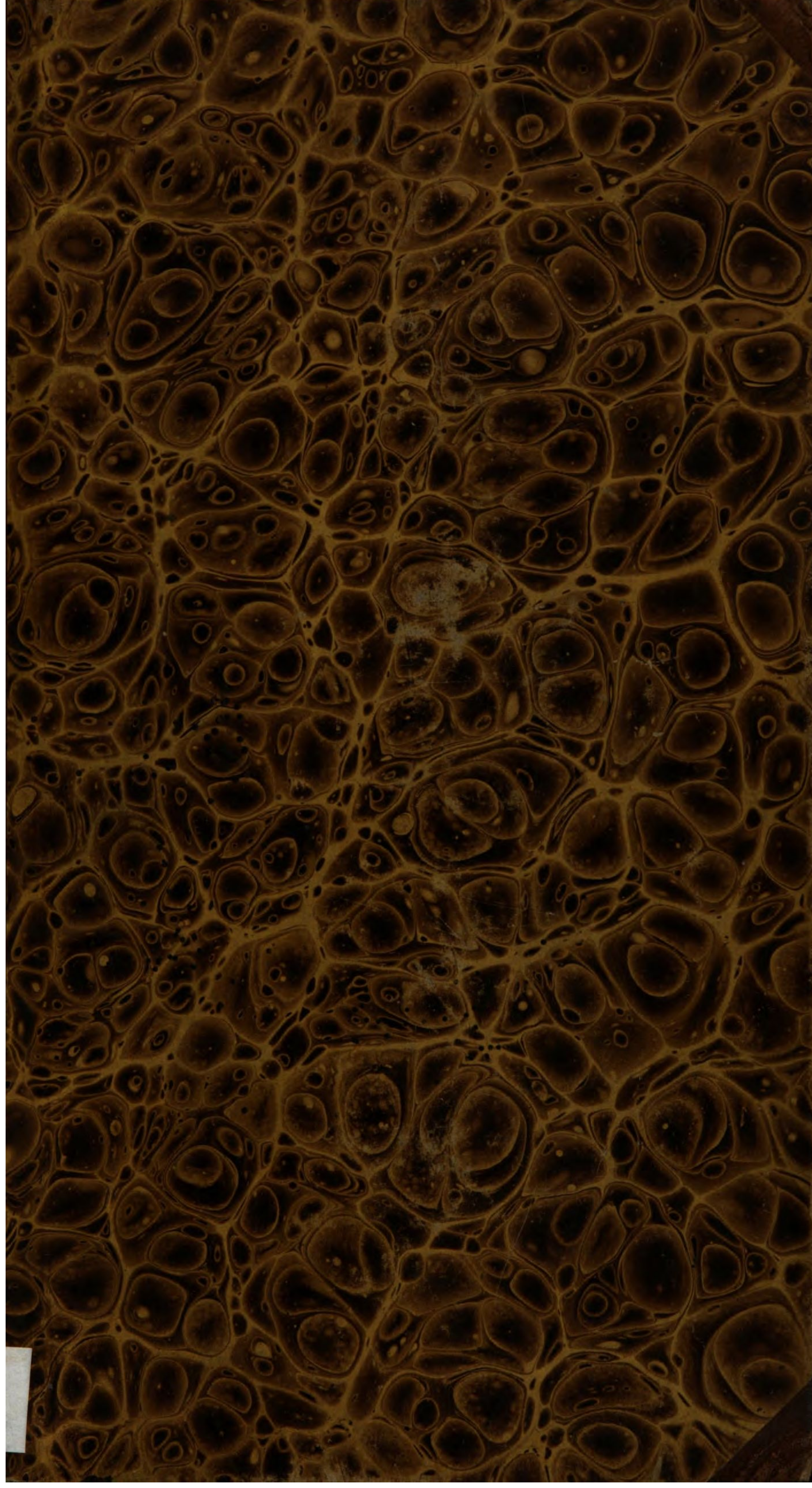




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✓ THE *F13.*
COMPLETE WORKS
OF
LORD BYRON,

NEW EDITION,

ENTIRELY REVISED AND CORRECTED FROM THE
LAST LONDON EDITION.

VOL. IV.



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12

COMPLETE WORKS

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1795

PRINTED IN LONDON

By J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, LONDON.

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DON JUAN.

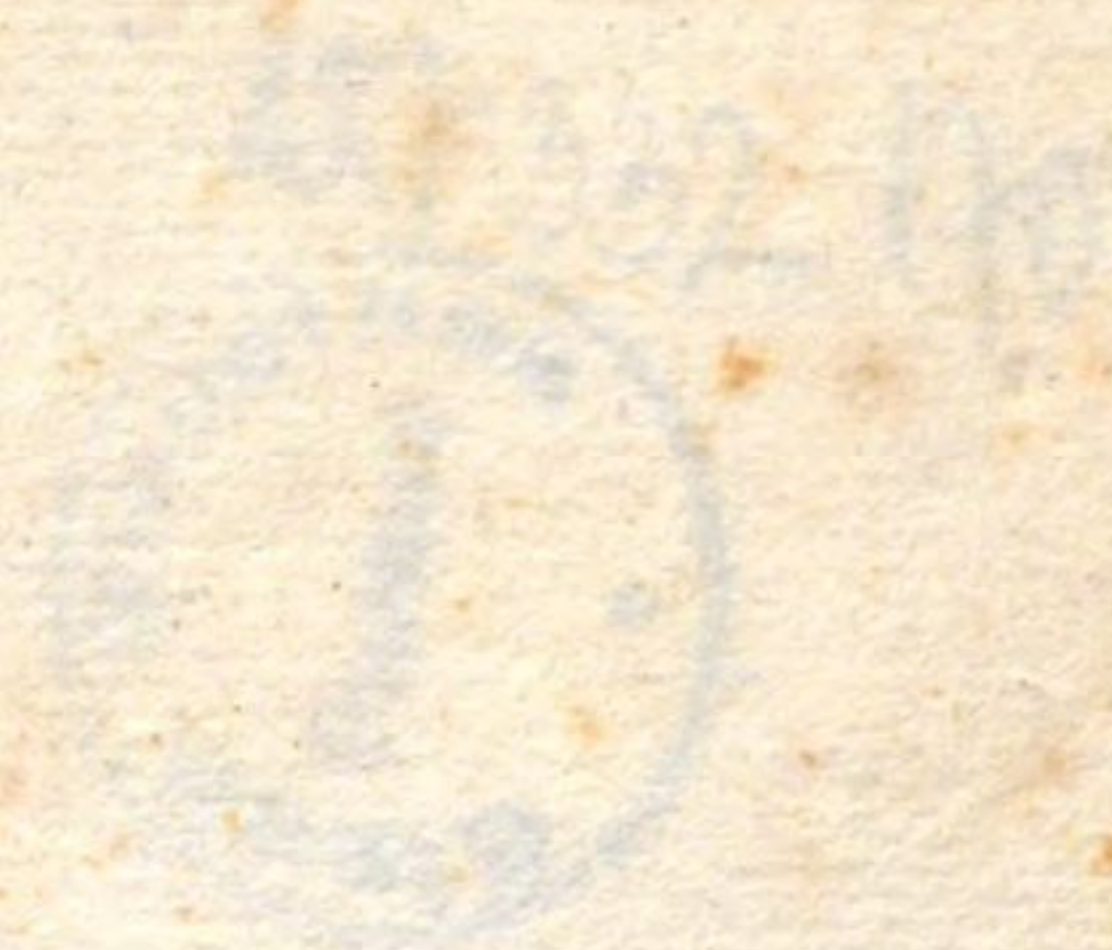
Difficile est proprie communia dicere.

HOR. *Epist. ad Pison.*

Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more
Cakes and Ale?—Yes, by St. Anne, and Ginger shall be hot i'
the mouth, too!—SHAKSPEARE, *Twelfth Night*; or *What you Will*.

DON JUAN.

THE LIFE OF DON JUAN, IN TWO VOLUMES. BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TWO GOSPELS." LONDON: J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, 1794.



DEDICATION.

I.

BOB SOUTHEY ! You 're a poet—Poet-laureate,
And representative of all the race,
Although 't is true that you turn'd out a Tory at
Last,—yours has lately been a common case,—
And now, my Epic Renegade ! what are ye at ?
With all the Lakers, in and out of place ?
A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye
Like “ four and twenty Blackbirds in a pye ;

II.

“ Which pye being open'd they began to sing ”
(This old song and new simile holds good),
“ A dainty dish to set before the King,”
Or Regent, who admires such kind of food ;—
And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,
But like a hawk encumber'd with his hood,—
Explaining metaphysics to the nation—
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

III.

You, Bob ! are rather insolent, you know,
At being disappointed in your wish
To supersede all warblers here below,
And be the only Blackbird in the dish ;
And then you overstrain yourself, or so,
And tumble downward like the flying fish
Gasping on deck, because you soar too high, Bob,
And fall, for lack of moisture quite a-dry, Bob !

IV.

And Wordsworth, in a rather long “ Excursion ”
(I think the quarto holds five hundred pages),
Has given a sample from the vasty version
Of his new system to perplex the sages ;

'T is poetry—at least by his assertion,
 And may appear so when the dog-star rages—
 And he who understands it would be able
 To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

V.

You—Gentlemen ! by dint of long seclusion
 From better company, have kept your own
 At Keswick, ² and, through still continued fusion
 Of one another's minds, at last have grown
 To deem as a most logical conclusion,
 That Poesy has wreaths for you alone :
 There is a narrowness in such a notion,
 Which makes me wish you 'd change your lakes for ocean.

VI.

I would not imitate the petty thought,
 Nor coin my self-love to so base a vice,
 For all the glory your conversion brought,
 Since gold alone should not have been its price.
 You have your salary ; was 't for that you wrought ?
 And Wordsworth has his place in the Excise. ³
 You 're shabby fellows—true—but poets still,
 And duly seated on the immortal hill.

VII.

Your bays may hide the boldness of your brows—
 Perhaps some virtuous blushes ;—let them go—
 To you I envy neither fruit nor boughs—
 And for the fame you would engross below,
 The field is universal, and allows
 Scope to all such as feel the inherent glow :
 Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore, and Crabbe, will try
 'Gainst you the question with posterity.

VIII.

For me, who, wandering with pedestrian Muses,
 Contend not with you on the winged steed,
 I wish your fate may yield ye, when she chooses,
 The fame you envy, and the skill you need ;
 And recollect a poet nothing loses
 In giving to his brethren their full meed
 Of merit, and complaint of present days
 Is not the certain path to future praise.

IX.

He that reserves his laurels for posterity
 (Who does not often claim the bright reversion)
 Has generally no great crop to spare it, he
 Being only injured by his own assertion ;
 And although here and there some glorious rarity
 Arise like Titan from the sea's immersion,
 The major part of such appellants go
 To—God knows where—for no one else can know.

X.

If, fallen in evil days on evil tongues,
 Milton appeal'd to the Avenger, Time,
 If Time, the Avenger, execrates his wrongs,
 And makes the word " Miltonic " mean " sublime,"
 He deign'd not to belie his soul in songs,
 Nor turn his very talent to a crime ;
 He did not loathe the Sire to laud the Son,
 But closed the tyrant-hater he begun.

XI.

Think'st thou, could he—the blind Old Man—arise
 Like Samuel from the grave, to freeze once more
 The blood of monarchs with his prophecies,
 Or be alive again—again all hoar
 With time and trials, and those helpless eyes,
 And heartless daughters—worn—and pale ⁴—
 Would *he* adore a sultan ? *he* obey
 The intellectual eunuch Castlereagh ? ⁵

XII.

Cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid miscreant !
 Dabbling its sleek young hands in Erin's gore.
 And thus for wider carnage taught to pant,
 Transferr'd to gorge upon a sister shore,
 The vulgarest tool that Tyranny could want,
 With just enough of talent, and no more,
 To lengthen fetters by another fix'd,
 And offer poison long already mix'd.

XIII.

An orator of such set trash of phrase
 Ineffably—legitimately vile,
 That even its grossest flatterers dare not praise,
 Nor foes—all nations—condescend to smile,—

Not even a sprightly blunder's spark can blaze
 From that Ixion grindstone's ceaseless toil,
 That turns and turns to give the world a notion
 Of endless torments and perpetual motion.

XIV.

A bungler even in its disgusting trade,
 And botching, patching, leaving still behind
 Something of which its masters are afraid,
 States to be curb'd, and thoughts to be confined,
 Conspiracy or Congress to be made—
 Cobbling at manacles for all mankind—
 A tinkering slave-maker, who mends old chains,
 With God and man's abhorrence for its gains.

XV.

If we may judge of matter by the mind,
 Emasculated to the marrow *It*
 Hath but two objects, how to serve, and bind
 Deeming the chain it wears even men may fit,
 Eutropius of its many masters, ⁶—blind
 To worth as freedom, wisdom as to wit,
 Fearless—because *no* feeling dwells in ice,
 Its very courage stagnates to a vice.

XVI.

Where shall I turn me not to *view* its bonds,
 For I will never *feel* them ;—Italy!
 Thy late reviving Roman soul desponds
 Beneath the lie this State-thing breathed o'er thee—
 Thy clanking chain, and Erin's yet green wounds,
 Have voices—tongues to cry aloud for me.
 Europe has slaves—allies—kings—armies still,
 And Southey lives to sing them very ill.

XVIII.

Meantime—Sir Laureate—I proceed to dedicate,
 In honest simple verse, this song to you.
 And, if in flattering strains I do not predicate,
 'T is that I still retain my “ buff and blue ; ” ⁷
 My politics as yet are all to educate :
 Apostasy's so fashionable, too,
 To keep *one* creed's a task grown quite Herculean ;
 Is it not so, my Tory, ultra-Julian ? ⁸

Venice, September 16, 1818.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 3.

This "Dedication" was suppressed, in 1819, with Lord Byron's reluctant consent.

Note 2. Page 4.

Mr. Southey is the only poet of the day that ever resided at Keswick. Mr. Wordsworth, who lived at one time on Grasmere, has for many years past occupied Mount Rydal, near Ambleside: Professor Wilson possesses an elegant villa on Windermere: Coleridge, Lambe, Lloyd, and others classed by the Edinburgh Review in the Lake School, never, we believe, had any connection with that part of the country.—E.

Note 3. Page 4.

Wordsworth's place may be in the Customs—it is, I think, in that or the Excise—besides another at Lord Lonsdale's table, where this poetical charlatan and political parasite licks up the crumbs with a hardened alacrity; the converted Jacobin having long subsided into the clownish sycophant of the worst prejudices of the aristocracy.

Note 4. Page 5.

"Pale, but not cadaverous:"—Milton's two elder daughters are said to have robbed him of his books, besides cheating and plaguing him in the economy of his house, &c. &c. His feelings on such an outrage, both as a parent and a scholar, must have been singularly painful. Hayley compares him to Lear. See part third, Life of Milton, by W. Hayley (or Hailey, as spelt in the edition before me).

Note 5. Page 5.

Or,—

"Would *he* subside into a hackney Laureate—
A scribbling, self-sold, soul-hired, scorn'd Iscariot!"

I doubt if "Laureate" and "Iscariot" be good rhymes, but must say, as Ben Jonson did to Sylvester, who challenged him to rhyme with—

"I, John Sylvester,
Lay with your sister."

Jonson answered,—*"I, Ben Jonson, lay with your wife."* Sylvester answered—*"That is not rhyme."*—"No," said Ben Jonson; "but it is *true*."

Note 6. Page 6

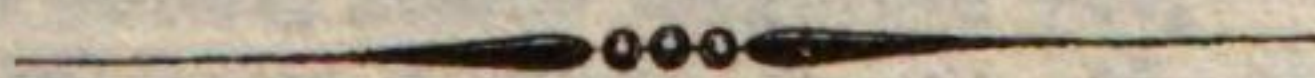
For the character of Eutropius, the eunuch and minister at the court of Arcadius, see Gibbon.

Note 7. Page 6.

Mr. Fox and the Whig Club of his time adopted an uniform of blue and buff: hence the coverings of the Edinburgh Review, &c.—E.

Note 8. Page 6.

I allude not to our friend Landor's hero, the traitor Count Julian, but to Gibbon's hero, vulgarly yclept "The Apostate."



NOTES

Page 1. Page 2.

This "Dedication" was suggested by Mr. Fox and Mr. Gibbon's original manuscript.

Page 3. Page 4.

Mr. Southey is the only poet of the day that I have read. Mr. W. Wordsworth, who lived at one time on Grasmere, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Keats, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Shelley, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Byron, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Keats, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Shelley, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Byron, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics.

FRAGMENT

Wordsworth's place may be in the "Dedication"—it is, I think, in that or the "Dedication" which is the only one that I have read. Mr. W. Wordsworth, who lived at one time on Grasmere, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Keats, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Shelley, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Byron, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Keats, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Shelley, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics. Mr. Byron, who lived at one time in the Strand, has for many years past occupied himself with the study of the classics.

ON THE BACK OF THE POET'S MS. OF CANTO I.

I would to heaven that I were so much clay,
As I am blood, bone, marrow, passion, feeling—
Because at least the past were pass'd away—
And for the future—(but I write this reeling,
Having got drunk exceedingly to-day,
So that I seem to stand upon the ceiling)
I say—the future is a serious matter—
And so—for God's sake—hock and soda-water!

DON JUAN.

CANTO I.

I.

I WANT a hero :—an uncommon want,
When every year and month sends forth a new one,
Till, after cloying the gazettes with cant,
The age discovers he is not the true one :
Of such as these I should not care to vaunt,
I'll therefore take our ancient friend Don Juan ;
We all have seen him in the pantomime
Sent to the devil somewhat ere his time.

II.

Vernon, the butcher Cumberland, Wolfe, Hawke,
Prince Ferdinand, Granby, Burgoyne, Keppel, Howe,
Evil and good, have had their tithe of talk,
And fill'd their sign-posts then, like Wellesley now ;
Each in their turn, like Banquo's monarchs, stalk,
Followers of fame, " nine farrow " of that sow :
France, too, had Buonaparte and Dumourier,
Recorded in the Moniteur and Courier.

III.

Barnave, Brissot, Condorcet, Mirabeau,
Petion, Cloutz, Danton, Marat, La Fayette,
Were French, and famous people, as we know ;
And there were others, scarce forgotten yet,
Joubert, Hoche, Marceau, Lannes, Desaix, Moreau,
With many of the military set,
Exceedingly remarkable at times,
But not at all adapted to my rhymes.

IV.

Nelson was once Britannia's god of war,
 And still should be so, but the tide is turn'd;
 There 's no more to be said of Trafalgar,
 'T is with our hero quietly inurn'd,
 Because the army 's grown more popular,
 At which the naval people are concern'd;
 Besides, the prince is all for the land-service,
 Forgetting Duncan, Nelson, Howe, and Jervis.

V.

Brave men were living before Agamemnon,^a
 And since, exceeding valorous and sage,
 A good deal like him too, though quite the same none,
 But then they shone not on the poet's page,
 And so have been forgotten:—I condemn none,
 But can't find any in the present age
 Fit for my poem (that is, for my new one);
 So, as I said, I 'll take my friend Don Juan.

VI.

Most epic poets plunge in "medias res"
 (Horace makes this the heroic turnpike road),^b
 And then your hero tells, whene'er you please,
 What went before—by way of episode,
 While seated after dinner at his ease,
 Beside his mistress in some soft abode,
 Palace or garden, paradise or cavern,
 Which serves the happy couple for a tavern.

VII.

That is the usual method, but not mine—
 My way is to begin with the beginning;
 The regularity of my design
 Forbids all wandering as the worst of sinning,
 And therefore I shall open with a line
 (Although it cost me half an hour in spinning),
 Narrating somewhat of Don Juan's father,
 And also of his mother, if you 'd rather.

VIII.

In Seville was he born, a pleasant city,
 Famous for oranges and women—he
 Who has not seen it will be much to pity,^c
 So says the proverb—and I quite agree;
 Of all the Spanish towns is none more pretty,
 Cadiz perhaps, but that you soon may see:
 Don Juan's parents lived beside the river,
 A noble stream, and call'd the Guadalquivir.

IX.

His father's name was Jose—*Don*, of course ;
 A true hidalgo, free from every stain
 Of Moor or Hebrew blood, he traced his source
 Through the most Gothic gentlemen of Spain.
 A better cavalier ne'er mounted horse,
 Or, being mounted, e'er got down again,
 Than Jose, who begot our hero, who
 Begot—but that 's to come—Well, to renew :

X.

His mother was a learned lady, famed
 For every branch of every science known—
 In every christian language ever named,
 With virtues equall'd by her wit alone ;
 She made the cleverest people quite ashamed,
 And e'en the good with inward envy groan,
 Finding themselves so very much exceeded
 In their own way by all the things that she did.

XI.

Her memory was a mine : she knew by heart
 All Calderon and greater part of Lopé,
 So that if any actor miss'd his part,
 She could have served him for the prompter's copy ;
 For her Feinagle's were an useless art,⁵
 And he himself obliged to shut up shop—he
 Could never make a memory so fine as
 That which adorn'd the brain of Donna Inez.

XII.

Her favourite science was the mathematical,
 Her noblest virtue was her magnanimity,
 Her wit (she sometimes tried at wit) was Attic all,
 Her serious sayings darken'd to sublimity ;⁶
 In short, in all things she was fairly what I call
 A prodigy—her morning dress was dimity,
 Her evening silk, or, in the summer, muslin,
 And other stuffs, with which I won't stay puzzling.

XIII.

She knew the Latin—that is, “ the Lord's prayer,”
 And Greek—the alphabet, I 'm nearly sure ;
 She read some French romances here and there,
 Although her mode of speaking was not pure ;
 For native Spanish she had no great care,
 At least her conversation was obscure ;
 Her thoughts were theorems, her words a problem,
 As if she deem'd that mystery would ennoble 'em.

XIV.

She liked the English and the Hebrew tongue,
 And said there was analogy between 'em;
 She proved it somehow out of sacred song,
 But I must leave the proofs to those who 've seen 'em;
 But this I heard her say, and can't be wrong,
 And all may think which way their judgments lean 'em,
 "'Tis strange—the Hebrew noun which means 'I am,'
 The English always use to govern d—n."

XV.

Some women use their tongues; she *look'd* a lecture,
 Each eye a sermon, and her brow a homily.
 An all-in-all sufficient self-director,
 Like the lamented late Sir Samuel Romilly,⁷
 The law's expounder, and the state's corrector,
 Whose suicide was almost an anomaly—
 One sad example more that 'all is vanity,'
 The jury brought their verdict in 'Insanity.'

XVI.

In short, she was a walking calculation,
 Miss Edgeworth's novels stepping from their covers,
 Or Mrs. Trimmer's books on education,
 Or "Cœlebs' Wife" set out in quest of lovers,⁸
 Morality's prim personification,
 In which not Envy's self a flaw discovers;
 To others' share let "female errors fall,"
 For she had not even one—the worst of all.

XVII.

Oh! she was perfect past all parallel—
 Of any modern female saint's comparison;
 So far above the cunning powers of hell,
 Her guardian angel had giv'n up his garrison;
 Even her minutest motions went as well
 As those of the best time-piece made by Harrison:
 In virtues nothing earthly could surpass her,
 Save thine "incomparable oil," Macassar!⁹

XVIII.

Perfect she was, but as perfection is
 Insipid in this naughty world of ours,
 Where our first parents never learn'd to kiss,
 Till they were exiled from their earlier bowers,
 Where all was peace, and innocence, and bliss
 (I wonder how they got through the twelve hours),
 Don Jose, like a lineal son of Eve,
 Went plucking various fruit without her leave.

XIX.

He was a mortal of the careless kind,
 With no great love for learning, or the learn'd,
 Who chose to go where'er he had a mind,
 And never dream'd his lady was concern'd :
 The world, as usual, wickedly inclined
 To see a kingdom or a house o'erturn'd,
 Whisper'd he had a mistress, some said *two*,
 But for domestic quarrels *one* will do.

XX.

Now Donna Inez had, with all her merit,
 A great opinion of her own good qualities ;
 Neglect, indeed, requires a saint to bear it,
 And such, indeed, she was in her moralities ;
 But then she had a devil of a spirit,
 And sometimes mix'd up fancies with realities,
 And let few opportunities escape
 Of getting her liege lord into a scrape.

XXI.

This was an easy matter with a man
 Oft in the wrong, and never on his guard ;
 And even the wisest, do the best they can,
 Have moments, hours, and days, so unprepared,
 That you might "brain them with their lady's fan,"¹⁰
 And sometimes ladies hit exceeding hard,
 And fans turn into falchions in fair hands,
 And why and wherefore no one understands.

XXII.

'T is pity learned virgins ever wed
 With persons of no sort of education,
 Or gentlemen who, though well-born and bred,
 Grow tired of scientific conversation :
 I don't chuse to say much upon this head,
 I 'm a plain man, and in a single station,
 But—oh ! ye lords of ladies intellectual,
 Inform us truly, have they not hen-peck'd you all?

XXIII.

Don Jose and his lady quarrell'd—*why*,
 Not any of the many could divine ;
 Though several thousand people chose to try,
 'T was surely no concern of theirs nor mine :
 I loathe that low vice—curiosity ;
 But if there 's any thing in which I shine,
 'T is in arranging all my friends' affairs,
 Not having, of my own, domestic cares.

XXIV.

And so I interfered, and with the best
 Intentions, but their treatment was not kind;
 I think the foolish people were possess'd,
 For neither of them could I ever find,
 Although their porter afterwards confess'd—
 But that 's no matter, and the worst 's behind,
 For little Juan o'er me threw, down stairs,
 A pail of housemaid's water unawares.

XXV.

A little curly-headed, good-for-nothing,
 And mischief-making monkey from his birth;
 His parents ne'er agreed, except in doting
 Upon the most unquiet imp on earth:
 Instead of quarrelling, had they been but both in
 Their senses, they 'd have sent young master forth
 To school, or had him soundly whipp'd at home,
 To teach him manners for the time to come.

XXVI.

Don Jose and the Donna Inez led
 For sometime an unhappy sort of life,
 Wishing each other, not divorced, but dead;
 They lived respectably as man and wife,
 Their conduct was exceedingly well-bred,
 And gave no outward signs of inward strife,
 Until at length the smother'd fire broke out,¹¹
 And put the business past all kind of doubt.

XXVII.

For Inez call'd some druggists and physicians,
 And tried to prove her loving lord was *mad*,¹²
 But as he had some lucid intermissions,
 She next decided he was only *bad*;
 Yet when they ask'd her for her depositions,
 No sort of explanation could be had,
 Save that her duty both to man and God
 Required this conduct—which seem'd very odd.

XXVIII.

She kept a journal, where his faults were noted,
 And open'd certain trunks of books and letters,
 All which might, if occasion served, be quoted;
 And then she had all Seville for abettors,
 Besides her good old grandmother (who doted);
 The hearers of her case became repeaters,
 Then advocates, inquisitors, and judges,
 Some for amusement, others for old grudges.

XXIX.

And then this best and meekest woman bore
 With such serenity her husband's woes,
 Just as the Spartan ladies did of yore,
 Who saw their spouses kill'd, and nobly chose
 Never to say a word about them more—
 Calmly she heard each calumny that rose,
 And saw *his* agonies with such sublimity,
 That all the world exclaim'd "What magnanimity!"

XXX.

No doubt, this patience, when the world is damning us,
 Is philosophic in our former friends;
 'T is also pleasant to be deem'd magnanimous,
 The more so in obtaining our own ends;
 And what the lawyers call a "*malus animus*,"
 Conduct like this by no means comprehends:
 Revenge in person 's certainly no virtue,
 But then 't is not *my* fault if *others* hurt you.

XXXI.

And if our quarrels should rip up old stories,
 And help them with a lie or two additional,
 I 'm not to blame, as you well know, no more is
 Any one else—they were become traditional;
 Besides, their resurrection aids our glories
 By contrast, which is what we just were wishing all;
 And science profits by this resurrection—
 Dead scandals form good subjects for dissection.

XXXII.

Their friends had tried at reconciliation,¹³
 Then their relations, who made matters worse¹⁴
 ('T were hard to tell upon a like occasion
 To whom it may be best to have recourse—
 I can't say much for friend or yet relation):
 The lawyers did their utmost for divorce,
 But scarce a fee was paid on either side
 Before, unluckily, Don Jose died.

XXXIII.

He died; and most unluckily, because,
 According to all hints I could collect
 From counsel learned in those kinds of laws
 (Although their talk 's obscure and circumspect),
 His death contrived to spoil a charming cause;
 A thousand pities also with respect
 To public feeling, which on this occasion
 Was manifested in a great sensation.

XXXIV.

But ah! he died; and buried with him lay
 The public feeling and the lawyers' fees:
 His house was sold, his servants sent away,
 A Jew took one of his two mistresses,
 A priest the other—at least so they say:
 I ask'd the doctors after his decease,
 He died of the slow fever call'd the tertian,
 And left his widow to her own aversion.

XXXV.

Yet Jose was an honourable man,
 That I must say, who knew him very well;
 Therefore his frailties I'll no further scan,
 Indeed there were not many more to tell;
 And if his passions now and then outran
 Discretion, and were not so peaceable
 As Numa's (who was also named Pompilius),
 He had been ill brought up, and was born bilious.

XXXVI.

Whate'er might be his worthlessness or worth,
 Poor fellow! he had many things to wound him,
 Let's own, since it can do no harm on earth;
 It was a trying moment that which found him
 Standing alone beside his desolate hearth,
 Where all his household gods lay shiver'd round him
 No choice was left his feelings or his pride,
 Save death or Doctors' Commons—so he died.

XXXVII.

Dying intestate, Juan was sole heir
 To a chancery-suit, and messuages, and lands,
 Which, with a long minority and care,
 Promised to turn out well in proper hands:
 Inez became sole guardian, which was fair,
 And answer'd but to nature's just demands;
 An only son left with an only mother
 Is brought up much more wisely than another.

XXXVIII.

Sagest of women, even of widows, she
 Resolved that Juan should be quite a paragon,
 And worthy of the noblest pedigree
 (His sire was of Castile, his dam from Arragon):
 Then for accomplishments of chivalry,
 In case our lord the king should go to war again
 He learn'd the arts of riding, fencing, gunnery,
 And how to scale a fortress—or a nunnery.

XXXIX.

But that which Donna Inez most desired,
 And saw into herself each day before all
 The learned tutors whom for him she hired,
 Was that his breeding should be strictly moral;
 Much into all his studies she inquired,
 And so they were submitted first to her all;
 Arts, sciences, no branch was made a mystery
 To Juan's eyes, excepting natural history.

XL.

The languages, especially the dead,
 The sciences, and most of all th' abstruse;
 The arts, at least all such as could be said
 To be the most remote from common use,
 In all these he was much and deeply read;
 But not a page of any thing that 's loose,
 Or hints continuation of the species,
 Was ever suffer'd, lest he should grow vicious.

XLI.

His classic studies made a little puzzle,
 Because of filthy loves of gods and goddesses,
 Who in the earlier ages raised a bustle,
 But never put on pantaloons or boddices;
 His reverend tutors had at times a tussle,
 And for their *Æneids*, *Iliads*, and *Odysseys*,
 Were forced to make an odd sort of apology,
 For Donna Inez dreaded the mythology.

XLII.

Ovid 's a rake, as half his verses show him;
 Anacreon's morals are a still worse sample;
 Catullus scarcely has a decent poem;
 I don't think Sappho's Ode a good example,
 Although¹⁵ Longinus tells us there is no hymn
 Where the sublime soars forth on wings more ample;
 But Virgil's songs are pure, except that horrid one
 Beginning with "*Formosum pastor Corydon*."

XLIII.

Lucretius' irreligion is too strong
 For early stomachs, to prove wholesome food;
 I can't help thinking Juvenal was wrong,
 Although no doubt his real intent was good,
 For speaking out so plainly in his song,
 So much indeed as to be downright rude;
 And then what proper person can be partial
 To all those nauseous epigrams of Martial?

XLIV.

Juan was taught from out the best edition,
 Expurgated by learned men, who place,
 Judiciously, from out the schoolboy's vision,
 The grosser parts; but, fearful to deface
 Too much their modest bard by this omission,
 And pitying sore his mutilated case,
 They only add them all in an appendix,¹⁶
 Which saves, in fact, the trouble of an index;

XLV.

For there we have them all "at one fell swoop,"
 Instead of being scatter'd through the pages;
 They stand forth marshall'd in a handsome troop,
 To meet the ingenuous youth of future ages,
 Till some less rigid editor shall stoop
 To call them back into their separate cages,
 Instead of standing staring altogether,
 Like garden gods—and not so decent either.

XLVI.

The missal too (it was the family missal)
 Was ornamented in a sort of way
 Which ancient mass-books often are, and this all
 Kinds of grotesques illumined; and how they
 Who saw those figures on the margin kiss all,
 Could turn their optics to the text and pray,
 Is more than I know—but Don Juan's mother
 Kept this herself, and gave her son another.

XLVII.

Sermons he read, and lectures he endured,
 And homilies, and lives of all the saints;
 To Jerome and to Chrysostom inured,
 He did not take such studies for restraints:
 But how faith is acquired, and then insured,
 So well not one of the aforesaid paints
 As Saint Augustine, in his fine Confessions,
 Which make the reader envy his transgressions.¹⁷

XLVIII.

This, too, was a seal'd book to little Juan—
 I can't but say that his mamma was right,
 If such an education was the true one.
 She scarcely trusted him from out her sight;
 Her maids were old, and if she took a new one,
 You might be sure she was a perfect fright;
 She did this during even her husband's life—
 I recommend as much to every wife.

XLIX.

Young Juan wax'd in goodliness and grace ;
 At six a charming child, and at eleven
 With all the promise of as fine a face
 As e'er to man's maturer growth was given :
 He studied steadily and grew apace,
 And seem'd, at least, in the right road to heaven ;
 For half his days were pass'd at church, the other
 Between his tutors, confessor, and mother.

L.

At six, I said he was a charming child,
 At twelve he was a fine, but quiet boy ;
 Although in infancy a little wild,
 They tamed him down amongst them : to destroy
 His natural spirit not in vain they toil'd,
 At least it seem'd so ; and his mother's joy
 Was to declare how sage, and still, and steady,
 Her young philosopher was grown already.

LI.

I had my doubts, perhaps I have them still,
 But what I say is neither here nor there ;
 I knew his father well, and have some skill
 In character—but it would not be fair
 From sire to son to augur good or ill :
 He and his wife were an ill-sorted pair—
 But scandal's my aversion—I protest
 Against all evil speaking, even in jest.

LII.

For my part I say nothing—nothing—but
 This I will say—my reasons are my own—
 That if I had an only son to put
 To school (as God be praised that I have none)
 'T is not with Donna Inez I would shut
 Him up to learn his catechism alone ;
 No, no—I'd send him out betimes to college,
 For there it was I pick'd up my own knowledge.

LIII.

For there one learns—'t is not for me to boast,
 Though I acquired—but I pass over *that*,
 As well as all the Greek I since have lost :
 I say that there's the place—but *Verbum sat*.
 I think I pick'd up, too, as well as most,
 Knowledge of matters—but, no matter *what*—
 I never married—but I think, I know,
 That sons should not be educated so.

LIV.

Young Juan now was sixteen years of age,
 Tall, handsome, slender, but well knit ; he seem'd
 Active, though not so sprightly, as a page ;
 And every body but his mother deem'd
 Him almost man : but she flew in a rage,
 And bit her lips (for else she might have scream'd)
 If any said so ; for to be precocious
 Was in her eyes a thing the most atrocious.

LV.

Amongst her numerous acquaintance, all
 Selected for discretion and devotion,
 There was the Donna Julia, whom to call
 Pretty were but to give a feeble notion
 Of many charms in her as natural
 As sweetness to the flower, or salt to ocean,
 Her zone to Venus, or his bow to Cupid
 (But this last simile is trite and stupid).

LVI.

The darkness of her oriental eye
 Accorded with her Moorish origin
 (Her blood was not all Spanish, by the by ;
 In Spain, you know, this is a sort of sin).
 When proud Granada fell, and, forced to fly,
 Boabdil wept, of Donna Julia's kin
 Some went to Africa, some stay'd in Spain,
 Her great great grandmamma chose to remain.

LVII.

She married (I forget the pedigree)
 With an hidalgo, who transmitted down
 His blood less noble than such blood should be ;
 At such alliances his sires would frown,
 In that point so precise in each degree
 That they bred *in and in*, as might be shown,
 Marrying their cousins—nay, their aunts and nieces,
 Which always spoils the breed, if it increases.

LVIII.

This heathenish cross restored the breed again,
 Ruin'd its blood, but much improved its flesh ;
 For from a root the ugliest in Old Spain,
 Sprung up a branch as beautiful as fresh ;
 The sons no more were short, the daughters plain ;
 But there's a rumour which I fain would hush—
 'T is said that Donna Julia's grandmamma
 Produced her Don more heirs at love than law.

LIX.

However this might be, the race went on
 Improving still through every generation,
 Until it centred in an only son
 Who left an only daughter; my narration
 May have suggested that this single one
 Could be but Julia (whom on this occasion
 I shall have much to speak about), and she
 Was married, charming, chaste, and twenty-three.

LX.

Her eye (I'm very fond of handsome eyes)
 Was large and dark, suppressing half its fire
 Until she spoke, then through its soft disguise
 Flash'd an expression more of pride than ire,
 And love than either; and there would arise
 A something in them which was not desire,
 But would have been, perhaps, but for the soul
 Which struggled through and chasten'd down the whole.

LXI.

Her glossy hair was cluster'd o'er a brow
 Bright with intelligence, and fair and smooth;
 Her eyebrow's shape was like the aerial bow,
 Her cheek all purple with the beam of youth,
 Mounting, at times, to a transparent glow,
 As if her veins ran lightning; she, in sooth,
 Possess'd an air and grace by no means common;
 Her stature tall—I hate a dumpy woman.

LXII.

Wedded she was some years, and to a man
 Of fifty, and such husbands are in plenty;
 And yet, I think, instead of such a ONE,
 'T were better to have two of five-and-twenty,
 Especially in countries near the sun:
 And now I think on 't, "mi vien in mente,"
 Ladies, even of the most uneasy virtue,
 Prefer a spouse whose age is short of thirty.

LXIII.

'T is a sad thing, I cannot chuse but say,
 And all the fault of that indecent sun,
 Who cannot leave alone our helpless clay,
 But will keep baking, broiling, burning on,
 That, howsoever people fast and pray,
 The flesh is frail, and so the soul undone:
 What men call gallantry, and gods adultery,
 Is much more common where the climate's sultry.

LXIV.

Happy the nations of the moral north!

Where all is virtue, and the winter season
Sends sin, without a rag on, shivering forth

(T was snow that brought Saint Anthony to reason);¹³

Where juries cast up what a wife is worth,

By laying whate'er sum, in mulct, they please on
The lover, who must pay a handsome price,
Because it is a marketable vice.

LXV.

Alfonso was the name of Julia's lord,

A man well-looking for his years, and who
Was neither much beloved nor yet abhorr'd :

They lived together as most people do,
Suffering each others' foibles by accord,

And not exactly either *one* or *two* ;
Yet he was jealous, though he did not show it,
For jealousy dislikes the world to know it.

XVI.

Julia was—yet I never could see why—

With Donna Inez quite a favourite friend ;
Between their tastes there was small sympathy,

For not a line had Julia ever penn'd :
Some people whisper (but no doubt they lie,

For malice still imputes some private end)

That Inez had, ere Don Alfonso's marriage,
Forgot with him her very prudent carriage ;

LXVII.

And that, still keeping up the old connexion,

Which time had lately render'd much more chaste,
She took his lady also in affection,

And certainly this course was much the best :

She flatter'd Julia with her sage protection,

And complimented Don Alfonso's taste ;
And if she could not (who can !) silence scandal,

At least she left it a more slender handle.

LXVIII.

I can't tell whether Julia saw the affair

With other people's eyes, or if her own
Discoveries made, but none could be aware

Of this, at least no symptom e'er was shown ;

Perhaps she did not know, or did not care,

Indifferent from the first, or callous grown :

I'm really puzzled what to think or say,

She kept her counsel in so close a way.

LXIX.

Juan she saw, and, as a pretty child,
 Caress'd him often, such a thing might be
 Quite innocently done, and harmless styled,
 When she had twenty years, and thirteen he;
 But I am not so sure I should have smiled
 When he was sixteen, Julia twenty-three :
 These few short years make wondrous alterations,
 Particularly amongst sun-burnt nations.

LXX.

Whate'er the cause might be, they had become
 Changed ; for the dame grew distant, the youth shy,
 Their looks cast down, their greetings almost dumb,
 And much embarrassment in either eye ;
 There surely will be little doubt with some
 That Donna Julia knew the reason why,
 But as for Juan, he had no more notion
 Than he who never saw the sea or ocean.

LXXI.

Yet Julia's very coldness still was kind,
 And tremulously gentle her small hand
 Withdrew itself from his, but left behind
 A little pressure, thrilling, and so bland
 And slight, so very slight, that to the mind
 'T was but a doubt ; but ne'er magician's wand
 Wrought change, with all Armida's fairy art,
 Like what this light touch left on Juan's heart.

LXXII.

And if she met him, though she smiled no more,
 She look'd a sadness sweeter than her smile,
 As if her heart had deeper thoughts in store
 She must not own, but cherish'd more the while,
 For that compression in its burning core :
 Even innocence itself has many a wile,
 And will not dare to trust itself with truth,
 And love is taught hypocrisy from youth.

LXXIII.

But passion most dissembles, yet betrays
 Even by its darkness ; as the blackest sky
 Foretells the heaviest tempest, it displays
 Its workings through the vainly-guarded eye,
 And in whatever aspect it arrays
 Itself, 't is still the same hypocrisy ;
 Coldness or anger, even disdain or hate,
 Are masks it often wears, and still too late.

LXXIV.

Then there were sighs, the deeper for suppression,
 And stolen glances, sweeter for the theft,
 And burning blushes, though for no transgression,
 Tremblings when met, and restlessness when left :
 All these are little preludes to possession,
 Of which young passion cannot be bereft,
 And merely tend to show how greatly love is
 Embarrass'd at first starting with a novice.

LXXV.

Poor Julia's heart was in an awkward state ;
 She felt it going, and resolved to make
 The noblest efforts for herself and mate,
 For honour's, pride's, religion's, virtue's sake ;
 Her resolutions were most truly great,
 And almost might have made a Tarquin quake ;
 She pray'd the Virgin Mary for her grace,
 As being the best judge of a lady's case.

LXXVI.

She vow'd she never would see Juan more,
 And next day paid a visit to his mother,
 And look'd extremely at the opening door,
 Which, by the Virgin's grace, let in another ;
 Grateful she was, and yet a little sore—
 Again it opens, it can be no other,
 'T is surely Juan now—No ! I'm afraid
 That night the Virgin was no further pray'd.

LXXVII.

She now determined that a virtuous woman
 Should rather face and overcome temptation,
 That flight was base and dastardly, and no man
 Should ever give her heart the least sensation ;
 That is to say, a thought beyond the common
 Preference that we must feel upon occasion
 For people who are pleasanter than others,
 But then they only seem so many brothers.

LXXVIII.

And even if by chance—and who can tell ?
 The devil's so very sly—she should discover
 That all within was not so very well,
 And, if still free, that such or such a lover
 Might please perhaps, a virtuous wife can quell
 Such thoughts, and be the better when they're over,
 And, if the man should ask, 't is but denial :
 I recommend young ladies to make trial.

LXXIX.

And then there are such things as love divine,
 Bright and immaculate, unmix'd and pure,
 Such as the angels think so very fine,
 And matrons, who would be no less secure,
 Platonic, perfect, "just such love as mine;"
 Thus Julia said—and thought so, to be sure,
 And so I'd have her think, were I the man
 On whom her reveries celestial ran.

LXXX.

Such love is innocent, and may exist
 Between young persons without any danger;
 A hand may first, and then a lip be kiss'd;
 For my part, to such doings I'm a stranger,
 But *hear* these freedoms form the utmost list
 Of all o'er which such love may be a ranger:
 If people go beyond, 't is quite a crime,
 But not my fault—I tell them all in time.

LXXXI.

Love, then, but love within its proper limits,
 Was Julia's innocent determination
 In young Don Juan's favour, and to him its
 Exertion might be useful on occasion;
 And, lighted at too pure a shrine to dim its
 Etherial lustre, with what sweet persuasion
 He might be taught, by love and her together—
 I really don't know what, nor Julia either.

LXXXII.

Fraught with this fine intention, and well fenced
 In mail of proof—her purity of soul,¹⁹
 She, for the future, of her strength convinced,
 And that her honour was a rock, or mole,
 Exceeding sagely from that hour dispensed
 With any kind of troublesome control;
 But whether Julia to the task was equal,
 Is that which must be mention'd in the sequel.

LXXXIII.

Her plan she deem'd both innocent and feasible,
 And, surely, with a stripling of sixteen,
 Not scandal's fangs could fix on much that 's seizable;
 Or, if they did so, satisfied to mean
 Nothing but what was good, her breast was peaceable—
 A quiet conscience makes one so serene!
 Christians have burnt each other, quite persuaded
 That all the apostles would have done as they did.

LXXXIV.

And if, in the mean time, her husband died,
 But Heaven forbid that such a thought should cross
 Her brain, though in a dream! (and then she sigh'd)
 Never could she survive that common loss;
 But just suppose that moment should betide,
 I only say suppose it—*inter nos*
 (This should be *entre nous*, for Julia thought
 In French, but then the rhyme would go for nought).

LXXXV.

I only say suppose this supposition:
 Juan, being then grown up to man's estate,
 Would fully suit a widow of condition;
 Even seven years hence it would not be too late;
 And in the interim (to pursue this vision)
 The mischief, after all, could not be great,
 For he would learn the rudiments of love,
 I mean the seraph way of those above.

LXXXVI.

So much for Julia. Now we'll turn to Juan.
 Poor little fellow! he had no idea
 Of his own case, and never hit the true one;
 In feelings quick as Ovid's Miss Medea,²⁰
 He puzzled over what he found a new one,
 But not as yet imagined it could be a
 Thing quite in course, and not at all alarming,
 Which, with a little patience, might grow charming.

LXXXVII.

Silent and pensive, idle, restless, slow,
 His home deserted for the lonely wood,
 Tormented with a wound he could not know,
 His, like all deep grief, plunged in solitude.
 I'm fond myself of solitude or so,
 But then I beg it may be understood
 By solitude I mean a sultan's, not
 A hermit's, with a haram for a grot.

LXXXVIII.

“Oh Love! in such a wilderness as this,
 Where transport and security entwine,
 Here is the empire of thy perfect bliss,
 And here thou art a god indeed divine.”
 The bard I quote from does not sing amiss,²¹
 With the exception of the second line,
 For that same twining “transport and security”
 Are twisted to a phrase of some obscurity.

LXXXIX.

The poet meant, no doubt, and thus appeals
 To the good sense and senses of mankind,
 The very thing which every body feels,
 As all have found on trial, or may find,
 That no one likes to be disturb'd at meals
 Or love :—I won't say more about "entwined"
 Or "transport," as we know all that before,
 But beg "security" will bolt the door.

XC.

Young Juan wander'd by the glassy brooks,
 Thinking unutterable things; he threw
 Himself at length within the leafy nooks,
 Where the wild branch of the cork forest grew;
 There poets find materials for their books,
 And every now and then we read them through,
 So that their plan and prosody are eligible,
 Unless, like Wordsworth, they prove unintelligible.

XCI.

He, Juan (and not Wordsworth) so pursued
 His self-communion with his own high soul,
 Until his mighty heart, in its great mood,
 Had mitigated part, though not the whole
 Of its disease; he did the best he could
 With things not very subject to control,
 And turn'd, without perceiving his condition,
 Like Coleridge, into a metaphysician.

XCII.

He thought about himself, and the whole earth,
 Of man the wonderful, and of the stars,
 And how the deuce they ever could have birth;
 And then he thought of earthquakes and of wars,
 How many miles the moon might have in girth;
 Of air-balloons, and of the many bars
 To perfect knowledge of the boundless skies;
 And then he thought of Donna Julia's eyes.

XCIII.

In thoughts like these true wisdom may discern
 Longings sublime, and aspirations high,
 Which some are born with, but the most part learn
 To plague themselves withal, they know not why:
 'T was strange that one so young should thus concern
 His brain about the action of the sky;
 If *you* think 't was philosophy that this did,
 I can't help thinking puberty assisted.

XCIV.

He pored upon the leaves, and on the flowers,
 And heard a voice in all the winds ; and then
 He thought of wood-nymphs and immortal bowers,
 And how the goddesses came down to men :
 He miss'd the pathway, he forgot the hours,
 And, when he look'd upon his watch again,
 He found how much old Time had been a winner,
 He also found that he had lost his dinner.

XCV.

Sometimes he turn'd to gaze upon his book,
 Boscan, or Garcilasso ;²⁹—by the wind
 Even as the page is rustled while we look,
 So by the poesy of his own mind
 Over the mystic leaf his soul was shook,
 As if 't were one whereon magicians bind
 Their spells, and give them to the passing gale,
 According to some good old woman's tale.

XCVI.

Thus would he while his lonely hours away
 Dissatisfied, not knowing what he wanted ;
 Nor glowing reverie, nor poet's lay,
 Could yield his spirit that for which it panted—
 A bosom whereon he his head might lay,
 And hear the heart beat with the love it granted,
 With—several other things which I forget,
 Or which, at least, I need not mention yet.

XCVII.

Those lonely walks and length'ning reveries
 Could not escape the gentle Julia's eyes ;
 She saw that Juan was not at his ease ;
 But that which chiefly may and must surprise,
 Is, that the Donna Inez did not tease
 Her only son with question or surmise ;
 Whether it was she did not see, or would not,
 Or, like all very clever people, could not.

XCVIII.

This may seem strange, but yet 't is very common ;
 For instance—gentlemen, whose ladies take
 Leave to o'erstep the written rights of woman,
 And break the—Which commandment is 't they break ?
 (I have forgot the number, and think no man
 Should rashly quote, for fear of a mistake.)
 I say, when these same gentlemen are jealous,
 They make some blunder, which their ladies tell us.

XCIX.

A real husband always is suspicious,
 But still no less suspects in the wrong place,
 Jealous of some one who had no such wishes,
 Or pand'ring blindly to his own disgrace,
 By harbouring some dear friend extremely vicious;
 The last indeed 's infallibly the case:
 And when the spouse and friend are gone off wholly,
 He wonders at their vice, and not his folly.

C.

Thus parents also are at times short-sighted;
 Though watchful as the lynx, they ne'er discover,
 The while the wicked world beholds, delighted,
 Young Hopeful's mistress, or Miss Fanny's lover,
 Till some confounded escapade has blighted
 The plan of twenty years, and all is over;
 And then the mother cries, the father swears,
 And wonders why the devil he got heirs.

CI.

But Inez was so anxious and so clear
 Of sight, that I must think, on this occasion,
 She had some other motive much more near
 For leaving Juan to this new temptation;
 But what that motive was, I shan't say here:
 Perhaps to finish Juan's education,
 Perhaps to open Don Alfonso's eyes,
 In case he thought his wife too great a prize.

CII.

It was upon a day, a summer's day;—
 Summer 's indeed a very dangerous season,
 And so is spring about the end of May;
 The sun, no doubt, is the prevailing reason;
 But whatsoe'er the cause is, one may say,
 And stand convicted of more truth than treason,
 That there are months which nature grows more merry in—
 March has its hares, and May must have its heroine.

CIII.

'T was on a summer's day—the sixth of June:
 I like to be particular in dates,
 Not only of the age and year, but moon;
 They are a sort of post-house, where the Fates
 Change horses, making history change its tune,
 Then spur away o'er empires and o'er states,
 Leaving at last not much besides chronology,
 Excepting the post-obits of theology.

CIV.

'T was on the sixth of June, about the hour
 Of half-past six—perhaps still nearer seven,
 When Julia sate within as pretty a bower
 As e'er held houri in that heathenish heaven
 Described by Mahomet, and Anacreon Moore,³⁵
 To whom the lyre and laurels have been given,
 With all the trophies of triumphant song—
 He won them well, and may he wear them long!

CV.

She sate, but not alone; I know not well
 How this same interview had taken place,
 And even if I knew, I should not tell—
 People should hold their tongues in any case:
 No matter how or why the thing befel,
 But there were she and Juan face to face—
 When two such faces are so, 't would be wise,
 But very difficult, to shut their eyes.

CVI.

How beautiful she look'd! her conscious heart
 Glow'd in her cheek, and yet she felt no wrong.
 Oh love! how perfect is thy mystic art,
 Strengthening the weak and trampling on the strong!
 How self-deceitful is the sagest part
 Of mortals whom thy lure hath led along!
 The precipice she stood on was immense—
 So was her creed in her own innocence.

CVII.

She thought of her own strength, and Juan's youth,
 And of the folly of all prudish fears,
 Victorious virtue, and domestic truth,
 And then of Don Alfonso's fifty years;
 I wish these last had not occur'd, in sooth,
 Because that number rarely much endears,
 And through all climes, the snowy and the sunny,
 Sounds ill in love, whate'er it may in money.

CVIII.

When people say, "I've told you *fifty* times,"
 They mean to scold, and very often do;
 When poets say, "I've written *fifty* rhymes,"
 They make you dread that they 'll recite them too;
 In gangs of *fifty*, thieves commit their crimes;
 At *fifty* love for love is rare, 't is true;
 But then, no doubt, it equally as true is,
 A good deal may be bought for fifty louis.

CIX.

Julia had honour, virtue, truth, and love,
 For Don Alfonso ; and she inly swore,
 By all the vows below to powers above,
 She never would disgrace the ring she wore,
 Nor leave a wish which wisdom might reprove ;
 And while she ponder'd this, besides much more,
 One hand on Juan's carelessly was thrown,
 Quite by mistake—she thought it was her own.

CX.

Unconsciously she lean'd upon the other,
 Which play'd within the tangles of her hair ;
 And to contend with thoughts she could not smother
 She seem'd, by the distraction of her air.
 'T was surely very wrong in Juan's mother
 To leave together this imprudent pair,
 She who for many years had watch'd her son so—
 I 'm very certain *mine* would not have done so.

CXI.

The hand which still held Juan's, by degrees
 Gently, but palpably, confirm'd its grasp,
 As if it said " Detain me, if you please ;"
 Yet there 's no doubt she only meant to clasp
 His fingers with a pure Platonic squeeze :
 She would have shrunk as from a toad or asp,
 Had she imagined such a thing could rouse
 A feeling dangerous to a prudent spouse.

CXII.

I cannot know what Juan thought of this,
 But what he did is much what you would do :
 His young lip thank'd it with a grateful kiss,
 And then, abash'd at his own joy, withdrew
 In deep despair, lest he had done amiss :
 Love is so very timid when 't is new.
 She blush'd, and frown'd not, but she strove to speak,
 And held her tongue, her voice was grown so weak.

CXIII.

The sun set, and up rose the yellow moon :
 The devil 's in the moon for mischief ; they
 Who call'd her CHASTE, methinks, began too soon
 Their nomenclature : there is not a day,
 The longest, not the twenty-first of June,
 Sees half the business in a wicked way
 On which three single hours of moonshine smile—
 And then she looks so modest all the while !

CXIV.

There is a dangerous silence in that hour,
 A stillness which leaves room for the full soul
 To open all itself, without the power
 Of calling wholly back its self-control ;
 The silver light which, hallowing tree and tower,
 Sheds beauty and deep softness o'er the whole,
 Breathes also to the heart, and o'er it throws
 A loving languor, which is not repose.

CXV.

And Julia sate with Juan, half embraced,
 And half retiring from the glowing arm,
 Which trembled like the bosom where 't was placed :
 Yet still she must have thought there was no harm,
 Or else 't were easy to withdraw her waist ;
 But then the situation had its charm,
 And then——God knows what next—I can't go on ;
 I 'm almost sorry that I e'er begun.

CXVI.

Oh Plato ! Plato ! you have paved the way,
 With your confounded fantasies, to more
 Immoral conduct, by the fancied sway
 Your fancy feigns o'er the controulless core
 Of human hearts, than all the long array
 Of poets and romancers :—You 're a bore,
 A charlatan, a coxcomb—and have been,
 At best, no better than a go-between.

CXVII.

And Julia's voice was lost, except in sighs,
 Until too late for useful conversation ;
 The tears were gushing from her gentle eyes,
 I wish, indeed, they had not had occasion ;
 But who, alas ! can love, and then be wise ?
 Not that remorse did not oppose temptation,
 A little still she strove, and much repented,
 And whispering "I will ne'er consent"—consented.

CXVIII.

'T is said that Xerxes offer'd a reward
 To those who could invent him a new pleasure ;
 Methinks the requisition 's rather hard,
 And must have cost his majesty a treasure :
 For my part, I 'm a moderate-minded bard,
 Fond of a little love (which I call leisure) ;
 I care not for new pleasures, as the old
 Are quite enough for me, so they but hold.

CXIX.

Oh pleasure ! you 're indeed a pleasant thing,
 Although one must be damn'd for you, no doubt ;
 I make a resolution every spring
 Of reformation, ere the year run out ;
 But, somehow, this my vestal vow takes wing,
 Yet still, I trust, it may be kept throughout :
 I 'm very sorry, very much ashamed,
 And mean, next winter, to be quite reclaim'd.

CXX.

Here my chaste muse a liberty must take—
 Start not ! still chaster reader—she 'll be nice hence—
 Forward, and there is no great cause to quake :
 This liberty is a poetic licence,
 Which some irregularity may make
 In the design ; and as I have a high sense
 Of Aristotle and the Rules, 't is fit
 To beg his pardon when I err a bit.

CXXI.

This licence is to hope the reader will
 Suppose from June the sixth (the fatal day,
 Without whose epoch my poetic skill,
 For want of facts, would all be thrown away),
 But keeping Julia and Don Juan still
 In sight, that several months have pass'd ; we 'll say
 'T was in November, but I 'm not so sure
 About the day—the era 's more obscure.

CXXII.

We 'll talk of that anon.—'T is sweet to hear,
 At midnight, on the blue and moonlit deep,
 The song and oar of Adria's gondolier,
 By distance mellow'd, o'er the waters sweep ;
 'T is sweet to see the evening star appear ;
 'T is sweet to listen as the night-winds creep
 From leaf to leaf ; 't is sweet to view on high
 The rainbow, based on ocean, span the sky ;

CXXIII.

'T is sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
 Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home ;
 'T is sweet to know there is an eye will mark
 Our coming, and look brighter when we come ;
 'T is sweet to be awaken'd by the lark,
 Or lull'd by falling waters ; sweet the hum
 Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
 The lisp of children, and their earliest words.

CXXIV.

Sweet is the vintage, when the showering grapes,
 In bacchanal profusion, reel to earth
 Purple and gushing ; sweet are our escapes
 From civic revelry to rural mirth ;
 Sweet to the miser are his glittering heaps ;
 Sweet to the father is his first-born's birth ;
 Sweet is revenge—especially to women,
 Pillage to soldiers, prize-money to seamen.

CXXV.

Sweet is a legacy ; and passing sweet
 The unexpected death of some old lady
 Or gentleman of seventy years complete,
 Who 've made "us youth" wait too—too long already
 For an estate, or cash, or country-seat,
 Still breaking, but with stamina so steady,
 That all the Israelites are fit to mob its
 Next owner for their double-damn'd post-obits.

CXXVI.

'T is sweet to win, no matter how, one's laurels,
 By blood or ink ; 't is sweet to put an end
 To strife ; 't is sometimes sweet to have our quarrels,
 Particularly with a tiresome friend ;
 Sweet is old wine in bottles, ale in barrels ;
 Dear is the helpless creature we defend
 Against the world ; and dear the schoolboy spot
 We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot.

CXXVII.

But sweeter still than this, than these, than all,
 Is first and passionate love—it stands alone,
 Like Adam's recollection of his fall ;
 The tree of knowledge has been pluck'd—all 's known—
 And life yields nothing further to recall,
 Worthy of this ambrosial sin, so shown,
 No doubt in fable, as the unforgiven
 Fire which Prometheus filch'd for us from heaven.

CXXVIII.

Man 's a strange animal, and makes strange use
 Of his own nature and the various arts,
 And likes particularly to produce
 Some new experiment to show his parts :
 This is the age of oddities let loose,
 Where different talents find their different marts :
 You 'd best begin with truth, and when you 've lost your
 Labour, there 's a sure market for imposture.

CXXIX.

What opposite discoveries we have seen !

(Signs of true genius, and of empty pockets.)

One makes new noses, one a guillotine,

One breaks your bones, one sets them in their sockets ;

But vaccination certainly has been

A kind antithesis to Congreve's rockets,

With which the Doctor paid off an old pox,

By borrowing a new one from an ox.

CXXX.

Bread has been made (indifferent) from potatoes ;

And galvanism has set some corpses grinning,

But has not answer'd like the apparatus

Of the Humane Society's beginning

By which men are unsuffocated gratis :

What wondrous new machines have late been spinning !

I said the small-pox has gone out of late ;

Perhaps it may be follow'd by the great.

CXXXI.

'T is said the great came from America :

Perhaps it may set out on its return,—

The population there so spreads, they say

'T is grown high time to thin it in its turn,

With war, or plague, or famine, any way,

So that civilisation they may learn ;

And which in ravage the more loathsome evil is—

Their real lues, or our pseudo-syphilis ?

CXXXII.

This is the patent-age of new inventions

For killing bodies, and for saving souls,

All propagated with the best intentions ;

Sir Humphry Davy's lantern, by which coals

Are safely mined for in the mode he mentions,

Tombuctoo travels, voyages to the Poles,

Are ways to benefit mankind, as true,

Perhaps, as shooting them at Waterloo.

CXXXIII.

Man 's a phenomenon, one knows not what,

And wonderful beyond all wondrous measure ;

'T is pity though, in this sublime world, that

Pleasure 's a sin, and sometimes sin 's a pleasure ;

Few mortals know what end they would be at,

But whether glory, power, or love, or treasure,

The path is through perplexing ways, and when

The goal is gain'd, we die, you know—and then——

CXXXIV.

What then?—I do not know, no more do you—
 And so good night.—Return we to our story :
 'T was in November, when fine days are few,
 And the far mountains wax a little hoary,
 And clap a white cape on their mantles blue ;
 And the sea dashes round the promontory,
 And the loud breaker boils against the rock,
 And sober suns must set at five o'clock.

CXXXV.

'T was, as the watchmen say, a cloudy night ;
 No moon, no stars, the wind was low or loud
 By gusts, and many a sparkling hearth was bright
 With the piled wood, round which the family crowd :
 There 's something cheerful in that sort of light,
 Even as a summer sky 's without a cloud :
 I 'm fond of fire, and crickets, and all that,
 A lobster salad, and champagne, and chat.

CXXXVI.

'T was midnight—Donna Julia was in bed,
 Sleeping, most probably,—when at her door
 Arose a clatter might awake the dead,
 If they had never been awake before—
 And that they have been so we all have read,
 And are to be so, at the least, once more.
 The door was fasten'd, but, with voice and fist,
 First knocks were heard, then “Madam—Madam—hist !”

CXXXVII.

“For God's sake, Madam—Madam—here 's my master,”
 With more than half the city at his back—
 Was ever heard of such a curst disaster ?
 'T is not my fault—I kept good watch—Alack !
 Do, pray, undo the bolt a little faster—
 They 're on the stair just now, and in a crack
 Will all be here ; perhaps he yet may fly—
 Surely the window 's not so *very* high !”

CXXXVIII.

By this time Don Alfonso was arrived,
 With torches, friends, and servants in great number ;
 The major part of them had long been wived,
 And therefore paused not to disturb the slumber
 Of any wicked woman, who contrived
 By stealth her husband's temples to encumber :
 Examples of this kind are so contagious,
 Were *one* not punish'd, *all* would be outrageous.

CXXXIX.

I can't tell how, or why, or what suspicion
 Could enter into Don Alfonso's head ;
 But for a cavalier of his condition
 It surely was exceedingly ill-bred,
 Without a word of previous admonition,
 To hold a levee round his lady's bed,
 And summon lackeys, arm'd with fire and sword,
 To prove himself the thing he most abhorr'd.

CXL.

Poor Donna Julia! starting as from sleep
 (Mind—that I do not say—she had not slept),
 Began at once to scream, and yawn, and weep ;
 Her maid Antonia, who was an adept,
 Contrived to fling the bed-clothes in a heap,
 As if she had just now from out them crept .
 I can't tell why she should take all this trouble
 To prove her mistress had been sleeping double.

CXLI.

But Julia mistress, and Antonia maid,
 Appear'd like two poor harmless women, who
 Of goblins, but still more of men, afraid,
 Had thought one man might be deterr'd by two,
 And therefore side by side were gently laid,
 Until the hours of absence should run through,
 And truant husband should return, and say,
 "My dear, I was the first who came away."

CXLII.

Now Julia found at length a voice, and cried,
 "In Heaven's name, Don Alfonso, what d' ye mean?
 Has madness seized you? would that I had died
 Ere such a monster's victim I had been!
 What may this midnight violence betide,
 A sudden fit of drunkenness or spleen?
 Dare you suspect me, whom the thought would kill?
 Search, then, the room!"—Alfonso said, "I will."

CXLIII.

He search'd, *they* search'd, and rummaged every where,
 Closet and clothes'-press, chest and window-seat,
 And found much linen, lace, and several pair
 Of stockings, slippers, brushes, combs, complete,
 With other articles of ladies fair,
 To keep them beautiful, or leave them neat :
 Arras they prick'd and curtains with their swords,
 And wounded several shutters, and some boards.

CXLIV.

Under the bed they search'd, and there they found—
 No matter what—it was not that they sought;
 They open'd windows, gazing if the ground
 Had signs or foot-marks, but the earth said nought;
 And then they stared each others' faces round:
 'T is odd, not one of all these seekers thought,
 And seems to me almost a sort of blunder,
 Of looking *in* the bed as well as under.

CXLV.

During this inquisition Julia's tongue
 Was not asleep—"Yes, search and search," she cried,
 "Insult on insult heap, and wrong on wrong!
 It was for this that I became a bride!
 For this in silence I have suffer'd long
 A husband like Alfonso at my side;
 But now I'll bear no more, nor here remain,
 If there be law, or lawyers, in all Spain.

CXLVI.

"Yes, Don Alfonso, husband now no more,
 If ever you indeed deserved the name,
 Is 't worthy of your years?—you have threescore,
 Fifty, or sixty—it is all the same—
 Is 't wise or fitting causeless to explore
 For facts against a virtuous woman's fame?
 Ungrateful, perjured, barb'rous Don Alfonso!
 How dare you think your lady would go on so?"

CXLVII.

"Is it for this I have disdain'd to hold
 The common privileges of my sex?
 That I have chosen a confessor so old
 And deaf, that any other it would vex?
 And never once he has had cause to scold,
 But found my very innocence perplex
 So much, he always doubted I was married—
 How sorry you will be when I've miscarried!"

CXLVIII.

"Was it for this that no Cortejo e'er²⁵
 I yet have chosen from out the youth of Seville?
 Is it for this I scarce went any where,
 Except to bull-fights, mass, play, rout, and revel?
 Is it for this, whate'er my suitors were,
 I favour'd none—nay, was almost uncivil?
 Is it for this that General Count O'Reilly,
 Who took Algiers, declares I used him vilely?²⁶

CXLIX.

“ Did not th’ Italian Musico Cazzani
 Sing at my heart six months at least in vain?
 Did not his countryman, Count Corniani,
 Call me the only virtuous wife in Spain?
 Were there not also Russians, English, many?
 The Count Strongstroganoff I put in pain,
 And Lord Mount Coffeehouse, the Irish peer,²⁷
 Who kill’d himself for love (with wine) last year.

CL.

“ Have I not had two bishops at my feet,
 The Duke of Ichar, and Don Fernan Nunez?
 And is it thus a faithful wife you treat?
 I wonder in what quarter now the moon is:
 I praise your vast forbearance not to beat
 Me also, since the time so opportune is—
 Oh, valiant man! with sword drawn and cock’d trigger,
 Now, tell me, don’t you cut a pretty figure?

CLI.

“ Was it for this you took your sudden journey,
 Under pretence of business indispensable,
 With that sublime of rascals, your attorney,
 Whom I see standing there, and looking sensible
 Of having play’d the fool? though both I spurn, he
 Deserves the worst, his conduct ’s less defensible,
 Because, no doubt, ’t was for his dirty fee,
 And not from any love to you or me.

CLII.

“ If he comes here to take a deposition,
 By all means let the gentleman proceed;
 You’ve made the apartment in a fit condition:
 There’s pen and ink for you, sir, when you need—
 Let every thing be noted with precision,
 I would not you for nothing should be fee’d—
 But, as my maid’s undress’d, pray turn your spies out.”
 “ Oh!” sobb’d Antonia, “ I could tear their eyes out.”

CLIII.

“ There is the closet, there the toilet, there
 The ante-chamber—search them under, over;
 There is the sofa, there the great arm-chair,
 The chimney—which would really hold a lover.
 I wish to sleep, and beg you will take care,
 And make no further noise, till you discover
 The secret cavern of this lurking treasure—
 And, when ’t is found, let me, too, have that pleasure.

CLIV.

“ And now, hidalgo ! now that you have thrown
 Doubt upon me, confusion over all,
 Pray have the courtesy to make it known—
Who is the man you search for ? how d’ ye call
 Him ? what’s his lineage ? let him but be shown—
 I hope he ’s young and handsome—is he tall ?
 Tell me—and be assured, that since you stain
 My honour thus, it shall not be in vain.

CLV.

“ At least, perhaps, he has not sixty years—
 At that age he would be too old for slaughter,
 Or for so young a husband’s jealous fears—
 (Antonia ! let me have a glass of water).
 I am ashamed for having shed these tears,
 They are unworthy of my father’s daughter ;
 My mother dream’d not in my natal hour
 That I should fall into a monster’s power.

CLVI.

“ Perhaps ’t is of Antonia you are jealous,
 You saw that she was sleeping by my side
 When you broke in upon us with your fellows :
 Look where you please—we ’ve nothing, sir, to hide ;
 Only another time, I trust, you ’ll tell us,
 Or for the sake of decency abide
 A moment at the door, that we may be
 Dress’d to receive so much good company.

CLVII.

“ And now, sir, I have done, and say no more ;
 The little I have said may serve to show
 The guileless heart in silence may grieve o’er
 The wrongs to whose exposure it is slow :—
 I leave you to your conscience as before,
 ’T will one day ask you *why* you used me so ?
 God grant you feel not then the bitterest grief !—
 Antonia ! where ’s my pocket-handkerchief ?”

CLVIII.

She ceased, and turn’d upon her pillow ; pale
 She lay, her dark eyes flashing through their tears,
 Like skies that rain and lighten ; as a veil
 Waved and o’ershading her wan cheek, appears
 Her streaming hair ; the black curls strive, but fail,
 To hide the glossy shoulder which uprears
 Its snow through all : her soft lips lie apart,
 And louder than her breathing beats her heart.

CLIX.

The Senhor Don Alfonso stood confused ;
 Antonia bustled round the ransack'd room,
 And, turning up her nose, with looks abused
 Her master, and his myrmidons, of whom
 Not one, except the attorney, was amused ;
 He, like Achates, faithful to the tomb,
 So there were quarrels, cared not for the cause,
 Knowing they must be settled by the laws.

CLX.

With prying snub-nose, and small eyes, he stood,
 Following Antonia's motions here and there,
 With much suspicion in his attitude ;
 For reputations he had little care,
 So that a suit or action were made good ;
 Small pity had he for the young and fair,
 And ne'er believed in negatives, till these
 Were proved by competent false witnesses.

CLXI.

But Don Alfonso stood with downcast looks,
 And, truth to say, he made a foolish figure ;
 When, after searching in five hundred nooks,
 And treating a young wife with so much rigour,
 He gain'd no point, except some self-rebukes,
 Added to those his lady with such vigour
 Had pour'd upon him for the last half-hour,
 Quick, thick, and heavy—as a thunder-shower.

CLXII.

At first he tried to hammer an excuse,
 To which the sole reply were tears and sobs,
 And indications of hysterics, whose
 Prologue is always certain throes and throbs,
 Gasps, and whatever else the owners chuse.
 Alfonso saw his wife, and thought of Job's ;
 He saw, too, in perspective, her relations,
 And then he tried to muster all his patience.

CLXIII.

He stood in act to speak, or rather stammer,
 But sage Antonia cut him short, before
 The anvil of his speech received the hammer,
 With " Pray, sir, leave the room, and say no more,
 Or madam dies."—Alfonso mutter'd " D—n her !"
 But nothing else, the time of words was o'er ;
 He cast a rueful look or two, and did,
 He knew not wherefore, that which he was bid.

CLXIV.

With him retired his "*posse comitatus*,"
 The attorney last, who linger'd near the door,
 Reluctantly, still tarrying there as late as
 Antonia let him—not a little sore
 At this most strange and unexplain'd "*hiatus*"
 In Don Alfonso's facts, which just now wore
 An awkward look; as he revolved the case,
 The door was fasten'd in his legal face.

CLXV.

No sooner was it bolted, than—Oh shame!
 Oh sin! oh sorrow! and oh womankind!
 How can you do such things and keep your fame,
 Unless this world, and 't other too, be blind?
 Nothing so dear as an unfilch'd good name!
 But to proceed—for there is more behind;
 With much heart-felt reluctance be it said,
 Young Juan slipp'd, half-smother'd, from the bed.

CLXVI.

He had been hid—I don't pretend to say
 How, nor can I indeed describe the where—
 Young, slender, and pack'd easily, he lay,
 No doubt, in little compass, round or square;
 But pity him I neither must nor may
 His suffocation by that pretty pair;
 'T were better, sure, to die so, than be shut,
 With maudlin Clarence, in his Malmsey butt.

CLXVII.

And, secondly, I pity not, because
 He had no business to commit a sin,
 Forbid by heavenly, fined by human laws,—
 At least 't was rather early to begin;
 But at sixteen the conscience rarely gnaws
 So much as when we call our old debts in
 At sixty years, and draw the accounts of evil,
 And find a deuced balance with the devil.

CLXVIII.

Of his position I can give no notion:
 'T is written in the Hebrew Chronicle,
 How the physicians, leaving pill and potion,
 Prescribed, by way of blister, a young belle,
 When old King David's blood grew dull in motion,
 And that the medicine answer'd very well:
 Perhaps 't was in a different way applied,
 For David lived, but Juan nearly died.

CLXIX.

What 's to be done? Alfonso will be back
 The moment he has sent his fools away.
 Antonia's skill was put upon the rack,
 But no device could be brought into play—
 And how to parry the renew'd attack?
 Besides, it wanted but few hours of day:
 Antonia puzzled; Julia did not speak,
 But press'd her bloodless lip to Juan's cheek.

CLXX.

He turn'd his lip to hers, and with his hand
 Cail'd back the tangles of her wandering hair;
 Even then their love they could not all command,
 And half forgot their danger and despair:
 Antonia's patience now was at a stand—
 "Come, come, 't is no time now for fooling there,"
 She whisper'd in great wrath—"I must deposit
 This pretty gentleman within the closet:

CLXXI.

"Pray keep your nonsense for some luckier night—
 Who can have put my master in this mood?
 What will become on 't?—I 'm in such a fright!
 The devil 's in the urchin, and no good—
 Is this a time for giggling? this a plight?
 Why, don't you know that it may end in blood?
 You 'll lose your life, and I shall lose my place,
 My mistress all, for that half-girlish face.

CLXXII.

"Had it but been for a stout cavalier
 Of twenty-five or thirty—(come, make haste)
 But for a child, what piece of work is here!
 I really, madam, wonder at your taste—
 (Come, sir, get in)—my master must be near.
 There, for the present at the least he 's fast,
 And if we can but till the morning keep
 Our counsel—(Juan, mind you must not sleep)."

CLXXIII.

Now, Don Alfonso, entering, but alone,
 Closed the oration of the trusty maid;
 She loiter'd, and he told her to be gone,
 An order somewhat sullenly obey'd;
 However, present remedy was none,
 And no great good seem'd answer'd if she stay'd:
 Regarding both with slow and sidelong view,
 She snuff'd the candle, curtsied, and withdrew.

CLXXIV.

Alfonso paused a minute—then begun
 Some strange excuses for his late proceeding;
 He would not justify what he had done,
 To say the best, it was extreme ill-breeding:
 But there were ample reasons for it, none
 Of which he specified in this his pleading:
 His speech was a fine sample, on the whole,
 Of rhetoric, which the learn'd call "*rigmarole*."

CLXXV.

Julia said nought; though all the while there rose
 A ready answer, which at once enables
 A matron, who her husband's foible knows,
 By a few timely words to turn the tables,
 Which, if it does not silence, still must pose,
 Even if it should comprise a pack of fables;
 'T is to retort with firmness, and when he
 Suspects with *one*, do you reproach with *three*.

CLXXVI.

Julia, in fact, had tolerable grounds,—
 Alfonso's loves with Inez were well known;
 But whether 't was that one's own guilt confounds—
 But that can't be, as has been often shown;
 A lady with apologies abounds:
 It might be that her silence sprang alone
 From delicacy to Don Juan's ear,
 To whom she knew his mother's fame was dear.

CLXXVII.

There might be one more motive, which makes two:
 Alfonso ne'er to Juan had alluded,
 Mention'd his jealousy, but never who
 Had been the happy lover, he concluded,
 Conceal'd amongst his premises; 't is true,
 His mind the more o'er this its mystery brooded;
 To speak of Inez now were, one may say,
 Like throwing Juan in Alfonso's way.

CLXXVIII.

A hint, in tender cases, is enough;
 Silence is best, besides there is a *tact*
 (That modern phrase appears to me sad stuff,
 But it will serve to keep my verse compact)
 Which keeps, when push'd by questions rather rough,
 A lady always distant from the fact—
 The charming creatures lie with such a grace,
 There 's nothing so becoming to the face.

CLXXIX.

They blush, and we believe them ; at least I
 Have always done so ; 't is of no great use,
 In any case, attempting a reply,
 For then their eloquence grows quite profuse ;
 And when at length they are out of breath, they sigh,
 And cast their languid eyes down, and let loose
 A tear or two, and then we make it up ;
 And then—and then—and then—sit down and sup.

CLXXX.

Alfonso closed his speech, and begg'd her pardon,
 Which Julia half withheld, and then half granted,
 And laid conditions, he thought, very hard on,
 Denying several little things he wanted :
 He stood, like Adam, lingering near his garden,
 With useless penitence perplex'd and haunted,
 Beseeching she no further would refuse,
 When lo ! he stumbled o'er a pair of shoes.

CLXXXI.

A pair of shoes !—what then ? not much, if they
 Are such as fit with lady's feet, but these
 (No one can tell how much I grieve to say)
 Were masculine : to see them and to seize
 Was but a moment's act.—Ah ! well-a-day !
 My teeth begin to shatter, my veins freeze—
 Alfonso first examined well their fashion,
 And then flew out into another passion.

CLXXXII.

He left the room for his relinquish'd sword,
 And Julia instant to the closet flew ;
 " Fly, Juan, fly ! for Heaven's sake—not a word—
 The door is open—you may yet slip through
 The passage you so often have explored—
 Here is the garden-key—fly—fly—adieu !
 Haste—haste !—I hear Alfonso's hurrying feet—
 Day has not broke—there 's no one in the street."

CLXXXIII.

None can say that this was not good advice,
 The only mischief was, it came too late ;
 Of all experience 't is the usual price,
 A sort of income-tax laid on by fate :
 Juan had reach'd the room-door in a trice,
 And might have done so by the garden-gate,
 But met Alfonso in his dressing-gown,
 Who threaten'd death—so Juan knock'd him down.

CLXXXIV.

Dire was the scuffle, and out went the light;
 Antonia cried out "Rape!" and Julia "Fire!"
 But not a servant stirr'd to aid the fight.
 Alfonso, pommell'd to his heart's desire,
 Swore lustily he 'd be revenged this night:
 And Juan, too, blasphemed an octave higher.
 His blood was up; though young, he was a Tartar,
 And not at all disposed to prove a martyr.

CLXXXV.

Alfonso's sword had dropp'd ere he could draw it,
 And they continued battling hand to hand,
 For Juan very luckily ne'er saw it;
 His temper not being under great command,
 If at that moment he had chanced to claw it,
 Alfonso's days had not been in the land
 Much longer.—Think of husbands', lovers' lives!
 And how you may be doubly widows—wives!

CLXXXVI.

Alfonso grappled to detain the foe,
 And Juan throttled him to get away,
 And blood ('t was from the nose) began to flow;
 At last, as they more faintly wrestling lay,
 Juan contrived to give an awkward blow,
 And then his only garment quite gave way;
 He fled, like Joseph, leaving it—but there,
 I doubt, all likeness ends between the pair.

CLXXXVII.

Lights came at length, and men and maids, who found
 An awkward spectacle their eyes before:
 Antonia in hysterics, Julia swoon'd,
 Alfonso leaning, breathless, by the door;
 Some half-torn drapery scatter'd on the ground,
 Some blood, and several footsteps, but no more:
 Juan the gate gain'd, turn'd the key about,
 And liking not the inside, lock'd the out.

CLXXXVIII.

Here ends this canto.—Need I sing or say,
 How Juan, naked, favour'd by the night
 (Who favours what she should not), found his way,
 And reach'd his home in an unseemly plight?
 The pleasant scandal which arose next day,
 The nine days' wonder which was brought to light,
 And how Alfonso sued for a divorce,
 Were in the English newspapers, of course.

CLXXXIX.

If you would like to see the whole proceedings,
 The depositions, and the cause at full,
 The names of all the witnesses, the pleadings
 Of counsel to non-suit, or to annul,
 There 's more than one edition, and the readings
 Are various, but they none of them are dull :
 The best is that in short-hand, ta'en by Gurney,²⁸
 Who to Madrid on purpose made a journey.

CXC.

But Donna Inez, to divert the train
 Of one of the most circulating scandals
 That had for centuries been known in Spain,
 At least since the retirement of the Vandals,
 First vow'd (and never had she vow'd in vain)
 To Virgin Mary several pounds of candles ;
 And then, by the advice of some old ladies,
 She sent her son to be shipp'd off from Cadiz.

CXCI.

She had resolved that he should travel through
 All European climes by land or sea,
 To mend his former morals, and get new,
 Especially in France and Italy
 (At least this is the thing most people do).
 Julia was sent into a convent ; she
 Grieved, but, perhaps, her feelings may be better
 Shown in the following copy of her letter :

CXCII.

“ They tell me 't is decided, you depart :
 'T is wise—'t is well, but not the less a pain :
 I have no further claim on your young heart,
 Mine is the victim, and would be again ;
 To love too much has been the only art
 I used ;—I write in haste, and if a stain
 Be on this sheet, 't is not what it appears—
 My eyeballs burn and throb, but have no tears.

CXCIII.

“ I loved, I love you ; for this love have lost
 State, station, heaven, mankind's, my own esteem,
 And yet cannot regret what it hath cost,
 So dear is still the memory of that dream ;
 Yet, if I name my guilt, 't is not to boast,—
 None can deem harshlier of me than I deem :
 I trace this scrawl because I cannot rest—
 I 've nothing to reproach or to request.

CXCIV.

“ Man’s love is of man’s life a thing apart,
 ’T is woman’s whole existence ; man may range
 The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart ;
 Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in exchange
 Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,
 And few there are whom these cannot estrange ;
 Men have all these resources, we but one—
 To love again, and be again undone.”

CXCV.

“ You will proceed in pleasure and in pride,
 Beloved and loving many ; all is o’er
 For me on earth, except some years to hide
 My shame and sorrow deep in my heart’s core :
 These I could bear, but cannot cast aside
 The passion, which still rages as before ;
 And so farewell—forgive me, love me—No,
 That word is idle now—but let it go.

CXCVI.

“ My breast has been all weakness, is so yet ;
 But still, I think, I can collect my mind ;
 My blood still rushes where my spirit’s set,
 As roll the waves before the settled wind ;
 My heart is feminine, nor can forget—
 To all, except one image, madly blind :
 So shakes the needle, and so stands the pole,
 As vibrates my fond heart to my fix’d soul.

CXCVII.

“ I have no more to say, but linger still,
 And dare not set my seal upon this sheet,
 And yet I may as well the task fulfil,
 My misery can scarce be more complete :
 I had not lived till now, could sorrow kill ;
 Death shuns the wretch who fain the blow would meet,
 And I must even survive this last adieu,
 And bear with life, to love and pray for you !”

CXCVIII

This note was written upon gilt-edged paper,
 With a neat little crow-quill, slight and new :
 Her small white hand could hardly reach the taper,
 It trembled as magnetic needles do,
 And yet she did not let one tear escape her ;
 The seal a sun-flower ; “ *Elle vous suit partout,*”
 The motto cut upon a white cornelian,
 The wax was superfine, its hue vermilion.

CXCIX.

This was Don Juan's earliest scrape ; but whether
 I shall proceed with his adventures is
 Dependent on the public altogether :

We 'll see, however, what they say to this
 (Their favour in an author's cap 's a feather,
 And no great mischief 's done by their caprice) ;
 And, if their approbation we experience,
 Perhaps they 'll have some more about a year hence.

CC.

My poem 's epic, and is meant to be
 Divided in twelve books ; each book containing,
 With love, and war, a heavy gale at sea,
 A list of ships, and captains, and kings reigning,
 New characters ; the episodes are three :
 A panorama view of hell 's in training,
 After the style of Virgil and of Homer,
 So that my name of epic 's no misnomer.

CCI.

All these things will be specified in time,
 With strict regard to Aristotle's Rules,
 The *vade mecum* of the true sublime,
 Which makes so many poets, and some fools.
 Prose poets like blank verse—I 'm fond of rhyme—
 Good workmen never quarrel with their tools ;
 I 've got new mythological machinery,
 And very handsome supernatural scenery.

CCII.

There 's only one slight difference between
 Me and my epic brethren gone before,
 And here the advantage is my own, I ween
 (Not that I have not several merits more ;
 But this will more peculiarly be seen) ;
 They so embellish, that 't is quite a bore
 Their labyrinth of fables to thread through,
 Whereas this story 's actually true.

CCIII.

If any person doubt it, I appeal
 To history, tradition, and to facts,
 To newspapers, whose truth all know and feel,
 To plays in five, and operas in three acts :
 All these confirm my statement a good deal,
 But that which more completely faith exacts
 Is that myself, and several now in Seville,
 Saw Juan's last elopement with the devil.

CCIV.

If ever I should condescend to prose,
 I 'll write poetical commandments, which
 Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those
 That went before ; in these I shall enrich
 My text with many things that no one knows,
 And carry precept to the highest pitch :
 I 'll call the work " Longinus o'er a Bottle,
 Or, Every poet his *own* Aristotle."

CCV.

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope :
 Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey ;
 Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,
 The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthey :
 With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,
 And Campbell's Hippocrene is somewhat drouthy :
 Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers, nor
 Commit flirtation with the Muse of Moore :

CCVI.

Thou shalt not covet Mr. Sotheby's Muse,
 His Pegasus, nor any thing that 's his :
 Thou shalt not bear false witness, like " the Blues"
 (There 's one, at least, is very fond of this) :
 Thou shalt not write, in short, but what I chuse :
 This is true criticism, and you may kiss—
 Exactly as you please, or not—the rod,
 But if you don't; I 'll lay it on, by G—d !

CCVII.

If any person should presume to assert
 The story is not moral, first, I pray
 That they will not cry out before they 're hurt ;
 Then that they 'll read it o'er again, and say
 (But, doubtless, nobody will be so pert)
 That this is not a moral tale, though gay ;
 Besides, in canto twelfth, I mean to show
 The very place where wicked people go.

CCVIII.

If, after all, there should be some so blind
 To their own good, this warning to despise,
 Led by some tortuosity of mind,
 Not to believe my verse and their own eyes,
 And cry that they " the moral cannot find,"
 I tell him, if a clergyman, he lies—
 Should captains the remark, or critics, make,
 They also lie too—under a mistake.

CCIX.

The public approbation I expect,
 And beg they 'll take my word about the moral,
 Which I with their amusement will connect
 (So children cutting teeth receive a coral);
 Meantime, they 'll doubtless please to recollect
 My epical pretensions to the laurel:
 For fear some prudish readers should grow skittish,
 I 've bribed my grandmother's Review—the British.³⁰

CCX.

I sent it in a letter to the editor,
 Who thank'd me duly by return of post—
 I 'm for a handsome article his creditor;
 Yet, if my gentle Muse he please to roast,
 And break a promise after having made it her,
 Denying the receipt of what it cost,
 And smear his page with gall instead of honey,
 All I can say is—that he had the money.

CCXI.

I think that with this holy new alliance
 I may insure the public, and defy
 All other magazines of art or science,
 Daily, or monthly, or three-monthly; I
 Have not essay'd to multiply their clients,
 Because they tell me 't were in vain to try,
 And that the Edinburgh Review and Quarterly
 Treat a dissenting author very martyrly.

CCXII.

“*Non ego hoc ferrem calida juventa
 Consule Planco,*” Horace said,³¹ and so
 Say I, by which quotation there is meant a
 Hint that some six or seven good years ago
 (Long ere I dreamt of dating from the Brenta),
 I was most ready to return a blow,
 And would not brook at all this sort of thing
 In my hot youth—when George the Third was King.

CCXIII.

But now, at thirty years, my hair is gray
 (I wonder what it will be like at forty?
 I thought of a peruke the other day),
 My heart is not much greener; and, in short, I
 Have squander'd my whole summer while 't was May,
 And feel no more the spirit to retort; I
 Have spent my life, both interest and principal,
 And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul invincible.

CCXIV.

No more—no more—Oh ! never more on me
 The freshness of the heart can fall like dew,
 Which out of all the lovely things we see
 Extracts emotions beautiful and new,
 Hived in our bosoms like the bag o' the bee :
 Think'st thou the honey with those objects grew ?
 Alas ! 't was not in them, but in thy power,
 To double even the sweetness of a flower.

CCXV.

No more—no more—Oh ! never more, my heart,
 Canst thou be my sole world, my universe !
 Once all in all, but now a thing apart,
 Thou canst not be my blessing or my curse ;
 The illusion 's gone for ever, and thou art
 Insensible, I trust, but none the worse ;
 And in thy stead I 've got a deal of judgment,
 Though Heaven knows how it ever found a lodgment.

CCXVI.

My days of love are over—me no more³²
 The charms of maid, wife, and still less of widow,
 Can make the fool of which they made before—
 In short I must not lead the life I did do :
 The credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er,
 The copious use of claret is forbid, too ;
 So, for a good old gentlemanly vice,
 I think I must take up with avarice.

CCXVII.

Ambition was my idol, which was broken
 Before the shrines of Sorrow and of Pleasure ;
 And the two last have left me many a token
 O'er which reflection may be made at leisure :
 Now, like Friar Bacon's brazen head, I 've spoken,³³
 " Time is, time was, time 's past ; " a chymic treasure
 Is glittering youth, which I have spent betimes—
 My heart in passion, and my head on rhymes.

CCXVIII.

What is the end of fame ? 't is but to fill
 A certain portion of uncertain paper ;
 Some liken it to climbing up a hill,
 Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in vapour ;
 For this men write, speak, preach, and heroes kill,
 And bards burn what they call their " midnight taper,"
 To have, when the original is dust,
 A name, a wretched picture, and worse bust.

CCXIX.

What are the hopes of man? old Egypt's king,
 Cheops, erected the first pyramid
 And largest, thinking it was just the thing
 To keep his memory whole, and mummy hid;
 But somebody or other, rummaging,
 Burglariously broke his coffin's lid;
 Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
 Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops.

CCXX.

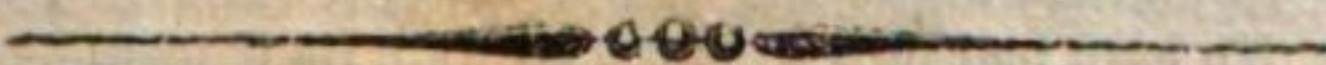
But I, being fond of true philosophy,
 Say very often to myself, "Alas!
 All things that have been born were born to die,
 And flesh (which Death mows down to hay) is grass:
 You 've pass'd your youth not so unpleasantly,
 And if you had it o'er again—'t would pass—
 So thank your stars that matters are no worse,
 And read your Bible, sir, and mind your purse."

CCXXI.

But for the present, gentle reader! and
 Still gentler purchaser! the bard—that's I—
 Must, with permission, shake you by the hand,
 And so your humble servant, and good bye!
 We meet again, if we should understand
 Each other; and if not, I shall not try
 Your patience further than by this short sample—
 'T were well if others follow'd my example.

CCXXII.

"Go, little book, from this my solitude!
 I cast thee on the waters; go thy ways!
 And if, as I believe, thy vein be good,
 The world will find thee after many days."⁵⁴
 When Southey's read, and Wordsworth understood,
 I can't help putting in my claim to praise—
 The four first rhymes are Southey's, every line;
 For God's sake, reader! take them not for mine.



NOTES TO CANTO I.

Note 1. Stanza ii.

We find on Lord Byron's MS. the following note to this stanza.

"In the eighth and concluding lecture of Mr. Hazlitt's canons of criticism, delivered at the Surrey Institution, I am accused of having 'lauded Buonaparte to the skies in the hour of his success, and then peevishly wreaking my disappointment on the god of my idolatry.' The first lines I ever wrote upon Buonaparte were the 'Ode on Napoleon' [see vol. ii, p. 436], after his abdication in 1814. All that I have ever written on that subject has been done since his decline;—I never 'met him in the hour of his success.' I have considered his character at different periods, in its strength and in its weakness; by his zealots I am accused of injustice—by his enemies as his warmest partisan; in many publications, both English and foreign.

"For the accuracy of my delineation I have high authority. A year and some months ago, I had the pleasure of seeing at Venice my friend the Honourable Douglas Kinnaird. In his way through Germany, he told me that he had been honoured with a presentation to, and some interviews with, one of the nearest family connections of Napoleon "(Eugene Beauharnais)." During one of these, he read and translated the lines alluding to Buonaparte, in the third Canto of Childe Harold. He informed me, that he was authorised by the illustrious personage—(still recognised as such by the Legitimacy in Europe)—to whom they were read, to say, *that 'the delineation was complete,'* or words to this effect. It is no puerile vanity which induces me to publish this fact;—but Mr. Hazlitt accuses my inconsistency, and infers my inaccuracy. Perhaps he will admit that, with regard to the latter, one of the most intimate family connections of the Emperor may be equally capable of deciding on the subject. I tell Mr. Hazlitt, that I never flattered Napoleon on the throne, nor maligned him since his fall. I wrote what I think are the incredible antitheses of his character.

"Mr. Hazlitt accuses me further of delineating *myself* in Childe Harold, &c. &c. I have denied this long ago—but, even were it true, Locke tells us, that all his knowledge of human understanding was derived from studying his own mind. From Mr. Hazlitt's opinion of my poetry I do not appeal; but I request that gentleman not to insult me by imputing the basest of crimes,—viz. 'praising publicly the same man whom I wished to depreciate in his adversity:—the *first* lines I ever wrote on Buonaparte were in his dispraise, in 1814,—the *last*, though not at all in his favour, were more impartial and discriminative, in 1818. Has he become more fortunate since 1814?—*B. Venice, 1819.*"

Note 2. Stanza v.

"Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi: sed omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro."—HORACE.

"Before great Agameinnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition 's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave;
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown,
No bard had they to make all time their own."—FRANCIS.

Note 3. Stanza vi.

"Semper ad eventum festinat, et in medias res,
Non secus ac notas, auditorem rapit."—HORACE.

"But to the grand event he speeds his course,
And bears his readers, with impetuous force,
Into the midst of things, while every line
Opens, by just degrees, his whole design."—FRANCIS.

Note 4. Stanza viii.

"Quien no ha visto Sevilla,
No ha visto maravilla."

Note 5. Stanza xi.

Professor Feinagle, of Baden, who, in 1812, under the especial patronage of the "*Blues*," delivered a course of lectures at the Royal Institution, on Mnemonics.—E.

Note 6. Stanza xii.

"Lady Byron had good ideas, but could never express them; wrote poetry also, but it was only good by accident. Her letters were always enigmatical, often unintelligible. She was governed by what she called fixed rules and principles squared mathematically."—*Lord B.*

Note 7. Stanza xv.

Sir Samuel Romilly, the eminent Chancery lawyer, lost his lady on the 29th of October, and committed suicide on the 2d of November, 1818.—"But there will come a day of reckoning, even if I should not live to see it. I have at least seen Romilly shivered, who was one of my assassins. When that man was doing his worst to uproot my whole family, tree, branch, and blossoms—when, after taking my retainer, he went over to them—when he was bringing desolation on my household gods—did he think that, in less than three years, a natural event—a severe, domestic, but an expected and common calamity—would lay his carcass in a cross-road, or stamp his name in a verdict of lunacy! Did he (who in his sexagenary * * *) reflect or consider what *my* feelings must have been, when wife, and child, and sister, and name, and fame, and country, were to be my sacrifice on his legal altar,—and this at a moment when my health was declining, my fortune embarrassed, and my mind had been shaken by many kinds of disappointment—while I was yet young, and might have reformed what might be wrong in my conduct, and retrieved what was perplexing in my affairs! But he is in his grave," &c.—*B. Letters*, 7th June, 1819.

Note 8. Stanza xvi.

Miss Hannah More's "*Cœbebs in search of a Wife; comprehending Observations on Domestic Manners*," &c.—a sermon-like novel, which had great success at the time, and is now forgotten.—E.

Note 9. Stanza xvii.

"Description des vertus incomparables de l'Huile de Macassar." See the Advertisement.

Note 10. Stanza xxi.

"By this hand, if I were now by this rascal, I could brain him with his lady's fan."—SHAKESPEARE.

Note 11. Stanza xxvi.

"Lady Byron had left London at the latter end of January, on a visit to her father's house in Leicestershire, and Lord Byron was, in a short time after, to follow her. They had parted in the utmost kindness,—she wrote him a letter full of playfulness and affection, on the road, and, immediately on her arrival at Kirkby Mallory, her father wrote to acquaint Lord Byron that she would return to him no more. At the time when he had to stand this unexpected shock, his pecuniary embarrassments, which had been fast gathering around him during the whole of the past year, had arrived at their utmost."—MOORE.

Note 12. Stanza xxvii.

"I was surprised one day by a doctor (Dr. Baillie) and a lawyer (Dr. Lushington) almost forcing themselves at the same time into my room. I did not know till afterwards the real object of their visit. I thought their questions singular, frivolous, and somewhat importunate, if not impertinent: but what should I have thought, if I had

known that they were sent to provide proofs of my insanity. I have no doubt that my answers to these emissaries were not very rational or consistent, for my imagination was heated with other things. But Dr. Baillie could not conscientiously make me out a certificate for Bedlam; and perhaps the lawver gave a more favourable report to his employers.—*B. Letter.*

Note 13. Stanza xxxii.

Mr. Rogers, Mr. Hobhouse &c. &c.—E.

Note 14. Stanza xxxii.

The Right Honourable R. Wilmot Horton, &c. The following is from a fragment of a novel written by Lord Byron in 1817:—"A few hours afterwards we were very good friends; and a few days after she set out for Aragon, with my son, on a visit to her father and mother. I did not accompany her immediately, having been in Aragon before, but was to join the family in their Moorish château within a few weeks. During her journey, I received a very affectionate letter from Donna Josepha, apprizing me of the welfare of herself and my son. On her arrival at the château, I received another, still more affectionate, pressing me, in very fond, and rather foolish terms, to join her immediately. As I was preparing to set out from Seville, I received a third—this was from her father, Don José di Cardozo, who requested me, in the politest manner, to dissolve my marriage. I answered him with equal politeness, that I would do no such thing. A fourth letter arrived—it was from Donna Josepha, in which she informed me that her father's letter was written by her particular desire. I requested the reason by return of post; she replied, by express, that as reason had nothing to do with the matter, it was unnecessary to give any—but that she was an injured and excellent woman. I then enquired why she had written to me the two preceding affectionate letters, requesting me to come to Aragon. She answered, that was because she believed me out of my senses—that, being unfit to take care of myself, I had only to set out on this journey alone, and, making my way without difficulty to Don José di Cardozo's, I should there have found the tenderest of wives and—a strait waistcoat. I had nothing to reply to this piece of affection, but a reiteration of my request for some lights upon the subject. I was answered, that they would only be related to the Inquisition. In the mean time, our domestic discrepancy had become a public topic of discussion; and the world, which always decides justly, not only in Aragon but in Andalusia, determined that I was not only to blame, but that all Spain could produce nobody so blameable. My case was supposed to comprise all the crimes which could, and several which could not, be committed; and little less than auto-da-fé was anticipated as the result. But let no man say that we are abandoned by our friends in adversity—it was just the reverse. Mine thronged around me to condemn, advise, and console me with their disapprobation. They told me all that was, would, or could be said on the subject. They shook their heads—they exhorted me—deplored me, with tears in their eyes, and—went to dinner."

Note 15. Stanza xlii.

See Longinus, Section 10, *ἵνα μὴ ἐν τι περὶ αὐτὴν πάθος φαίνεται, παθῶν δὲ σφόδρος.*

Note 16. Stanza xliv.

Fact! There is, or was, such an edition, with all the obnoxious epigrams of Martial placed by themselves at the end.

Note 17. Stanza xlvii.

See his Confessions, l. i. c. ix. By the representation which Saint Augustine gives of himself in his youth, it is easy to see that he was what we should call a rake. He avoided the school as the plague; he loved nothing but gaming and public shows; he robbed his father of every thing he could find; he invented a thousand lies to escape the rod, which they were obliged to make use of to punish his irregularities.

Note 18. Stanza lxiv.

For the particulars of St. Anthony's recipe for hot blood in cold weather, see BUTLER's *Lives of the saints*.

Note 19. Stanza lxxxii.

"Conscienza l'assicura,
La buona compagna che l'uom francheggia
Sotto l'usbergo del esser puro."—DANTE.

Note 20. Stanza lxxxvi.

See Ovid, de Arte Amandi, l. ii.

Note 21. Stanza lxxxviii.

Campbell's Gertrude of Wyoming—(I think)—the opening of Canto second—but quote from memory.

Note 22. Stanza xcv.

Juan Boscan Almogavà, of Barcelona, in concert with his friend Garcilasso, introduced the Italian style into Castilian poetry, and commenced his labours by writing sonnets in the manner of Petrarch. He died about the year 1543.

Garcilasso de la Vega, of a noble family at Toledo, was a warrior as well as a poet. After serving with distinction in Germany, Africa, and Provence, he was killed, in 1536, by a stone thrown from a tower which fell upon his head as he was leading on his battalion.—E.

Note 23. Stanza civ.

"Oh Susan! I've said, in the moments of mirth,
What's devotion to thee or to me?
I devoutly believe there's a heaven on earth,
And believe that that heaven's in thee."—MOORE.

Note 24. Stanza cxxxvii.

"To-night as Countess Guiccioli observed me poring over Don Juan, she stumbled by mere chance on the 137th stanza of the First Canto, and asked me what it meant. I told her, 'Nothing,—but your husband is coming.' As I said this in Italian with some emphasis, she started up in a fright, and said, 'Oh, my God, is he coming?' thinking it was her own. You may suppose we laughed when she found out the mistake. You will be amused, as I was;—it happened not three hours ago."—B. *Letter*, Nov. 8. 1819.

Note 25. Stanza cxlviii.

The Spanish "Cortejo" is much the same as the Italian "Cavalier Servente."

Note 26. Stanza cxlviii.

Donna Julia here made a mistake. Count O'Reilly did not take Algiers—but Algiers very nearly took him: he and his army and fleet retreated with great loss, and not much credit, from before that city, in the year 1775.

Note 27. Stanza cxlix.

This sneer at the titles of some of what were called the *Union Peers* of Ireland is capital.—HILL.

Note 28. Stanza clxxxix.

William Brodie Gurney, the eminent short-hand writer to the Houses of Parliament, succeeded his father in that office;—and the grandfather was author of a treatise on "brachygraphy."—E.

Note 29. Stanza cxciv.

MS.—"Or

'To mourn alone the love which has undone,'

"Or

'To lift our fatal love to God from man.'

Take that which, of these three, seems the best prescription."—B.

Note 30. Stanza ccix.

For the strictures of "the British," on this and the following stanza, and the Letter of Lord Byron to the Editor of "My Grandmother's Review," see Appendix at the end of Don Juan, and MOORE's *Notices*, vol. ii, p. 117.

Note 31. Stanza ccxii.

"Such treatment Horace would not bear,
When warm with youth—when Tullus fill'd the Consul's chair."—FRANCIS.

Note 32. Stanza ccxvi.

"Me nec femina, nec puer
Jam, nec spes animi credula mutui,
Nec certare juvat mero;
Nec vincere novis tempora floribus."—HORACE.

For me, alas! these joys are o'er;
For me the vernal garland blooms no more;
No more the feats of wine I prove,
Nor the delusive hopes of mutual love."—FRANCIS.

Note 33. Stanza ccxvii.

The old legend of Friar Bacon says, that the brazen head which he formed capable of speech, after uttering successively, "Time is"—"Time was"—and "Time is past," the opportunity of catechising it having been neglected, tumbled itself from the stand, and was shattered into a thousand pieces.—E.

Note 34. Stanza ccxxii.

See Southey's *Pilgrimage to Waterloo*, *sub fine*.



CANTO II.

I.

OH ye ! who teach the ingenuous youth of nations,
 Holland, France, England, Germany, or Spain,
 I pray ye flog them upon all occasions,
 It mends their morals ; never mind the pain :
 The best of mothers and of educations,
 In Juan's case, were but employ'd in vain,
 Since, in a way that 's rather of the oddest, he
 Became divested of his native modesty.

II.

Had he but been placed at a public school,
 In the third form, or even in the fourth,
 His daily task had kept his fancy cool,
 At least had he been nurtured in the north.
 Spain may prove an exception to the rule ;
 But then exceptions always prove its worth :
 A lad of sixteen causing a divorce
 Puzzled his tutors very much, of course.

III.

I can't say that it puzzles me at all,
 If all things be consider'd : first there was
 His lady mother, mathematical,
 A ——, never mind ; his tutor, an old ass ;
 A pretty woman—(that 's quite natural,
 Or else the thing had hardly come to pass) ;
 A husband rather old, not much in unity
 With his young wife—a time, and opportunity.

IV.

Well—well, the world must turn upon its axis,
 And all mankind turn with it, heads or tails,
 And live and die, make love, and pay our taxes,
 And as the veering wind shifts, shift our sails ;
 The king commands us, and the doctor quacks us,
 The priest instructs, and so our life exhales,
 A little breath, love, wine, ambition, fame,
 Fighting, devotion, dust—perhaps a name.

V.

I said, that Juan had been sent to Cadiz—
 A pretty town, I recollect it well—
 'T is there the mart of the colonial trade is
 (Or was, before Peru learn'd to rebel);
 And such sweet girls—I mean such graceful ladies,
 Their very walk would make your bosom swell;
 I can't describe it, though so much it strike,
 Nor liken it—I never saw the like:

VI.

An Arab horse, a stately stag, a barb
 New broke, a cameleopard, a gazelle,
 No—none of these will do:—and then their garb,
 Their veil and petticoat—Alas! to dwell
 Upon such things would very near absorb
 A canto:—then their feet and ankles!—well,
 Thank heaven I've got no metaphor quite ready
 (And so, my sober Muse—come, let's be steady—

VII.

Chaste Muse!—well, if you must, you must)—the veil
 Thrown back a moment with the glancing hand,
 While the o'erpowering eye, that turns you pale,
 Flashes into the heart.—All-sunny land
 Of love! when I forget you, may I fail
 To——say my prayers—but never was there plann'd
 A dress through which the eyes give such a volley,
 Except the Venetian Fazzioli.¹

VIII.

But to our tale:—The Donna Inez sent
 Her son to Cadiz only to embark;
 To stay there had not answer'd her intent;
 But why?—we leave the reader in the dark:
 'T was for a voyage that the young man was meant,
 As if a Spanish ship were Noah's ark,
 To wean him from the wickedness of earth,
 And send him like a dove of promise forth.

IX.

Don Juan bade his valet pack his things
 According to direction, then received
 A lecture and some money: for four springs
 He was to travel; and, though Inez grieved
 (As every kind of parting has its stings),
 She hoped he would improve—perhaps believed:
 A letter, too, she gave (he never read it)
 Of good advice—and two or three of credit.

X.

In the mean time, to pass her hours away,
 Brave Inez now set up a Sunday-school
 For naughty children, who would rather play
 (Like truant rogues) the devil or the fool ;
 Infants of three years old were taught that day,
 Dunces were whipp'd, or set upon a stool :
 The great success of Juan's education
 Spurr'd her to teach another generation.

XI.

Juan embark'd—the ship got under weigh,
 The wind was fair, the water passing rough ;
 A devil of a sea rolls in that bay,
 As I, who 've cross'd it oft, know well enough ;
 And, standing upon deck, the dashing spray
 Flies in one's face, and makes it weather-tough :
 And there he stood to take, and take again,
 His first—perhaps his last—farewell of Spain.

XII.

I can't but say it is an awkward sight
 To see one's native land receding through
 The growing waters—it unmans one quite ;
 Especially when life is rather new :
 I recollect Great Britain's coast looks white,
 But almost every other country 's blue,
 When, gazing on them, mystified by distance,
 We enter on our nautical existence.

XIII.

So Juan stood bewilder'd on the deck :
 The wind sung, cordage strain'd, and sailors swore,
 And the ship creak'd, the town became a speck,
 From which away so fair and fast they bore.
 The best of remedies is a beef-steak
 Against sea-sickness ; try it, sir, before
 You sneer, and I assure you this is true,
 For I have found it answer—so may you.

XIV.

Don Juan stood, and, gazing from the stern,
 Beheld his native Spain receding far :
 First partings form a lesson hard to learn,
 Even nations feel this when they go to war.
 There is a sort of unexpress'd concern,
 A kind of shock that sets one's heart ajar :
 At leaving even the most unpleasant people
 And places, one keeps looking at the steeple.

XV.

But Juan had got many things to leave—
 His mother, and a mistress, and no wife,
 So that he had much better cause to grieve
 Than many persons more advanced in life ;
 And, if we now and then a sigh must heave
 At quitting even those we quit in strife,
 No doubt we weep for those the heart endears—
 That is, till deeper griefs congeal our tears.

XVI.

So Juan wept, as wept the captive Jews
 By Babel's waters, still remembering Sion :
 I 'd weep, but mine is not a weeping muse,
 And such light griefs are not a thing to die on ;
 Young men should travel, if but to amuse
 Themselves ; and the next time their servants tie on
 Behind their carriages their new portmanteau,
 Perhaps it may be lined with this my canto.

XVII.

And Juan wept, and much he sigh'd, and thought,
 While his salt tears dropp'd into the salt sea,
 "Sweets to the sweet ;" (I like so much to quote :
 You must excuse this extract, 't is where she,
 The Queen of Denmark, for Ophelia brought
 Flowers to the grave), and sobbing often, he
 Reflected on his present situation,
 And seriously resolved on reformation.

XVIII.

"Farewell, my Spain ! a long farewell !" he cried,
 "Perhaps I may revisit thee no more,
 But die, as many an exiled heart has died,
 Of its own thirst to see again thy shore :
 Farewell, where Guadalquivir's waters glide !
 Farewell, my mother ! and, since all is o'er,
 Farewell, too, dearest Julia !—(here he drew
 Her letter out again, and read it through.)

XIX.

"And oh ! if e'er I should forget, I swear—
 But that 's impossible, and cannot be—
 Sooner shall this blue ocean melt to air,
 Sooner shall earth resolve itself to sea,
 Than I resign thine image, oh ! my fair !
 Or think of any thing, excepting thee ;
 A mind diseased no remedy can physic—
 (Here the ship gave a lurch, and he grew sea-sick).

XX.

“ Sooner shall heaven kiss earth—(here he fell sicker)
 Oh, Julia ! what is every other woe ?
 (For God’s sake, let me have a glass of liquor—
 Pedro ! Battista ! help me down below.)
 Julia ! my love !—(you rascal, Pedro, quicker)—
 Oh Julia !—(this cursed vessel pitches so)—
 Beloved Julia ! hear me still beseeching”—
 (Here he grew inarticulate with retching).

XXI.

He felt that chilling heaviness of heart,
 Or rather stomach, which, alas ! attends,
 Beyond the best apothecary’s art,
 The loss of love, the treachery of friends,
 Or death of those we dote on, when a part
 Of us dies with them as each fond hope ends :
 No doubt he would have been much more pathetic,
 But the sea acted as a strong emetic.

XXII.

Love’s a capricious power ; I’ve known it hold
 Out through a fever caused by its own heat,
 But be much puzzled by a cough and cold,
 And find a quinsy very hard to treat.
 Against all noble maladies he’s bold,
 But vulgar illnesses don’t like to meet,
 Nor that a sneeze should interrupt his sigh,
 Nor inflammations redden his blind eye.

XXIII.

But worst of all is nausea, or a pain
 About the lower region of the bowels ;
 Love, who heroically breathes a vein,
 Shrinks from the application of hot towels,
 And purgatives are dangerous to his reign,
 Sea-sickness death : his love was perfect, how else
 Could Juan’s passion, while the billows roar,
 Resist his stomach, ne’er at sea before ?

XXIV.

The ship, call’d the most holy “ Trinidad,”
 Was steering duly for the port Leghorn ;
 For there the Spanish family Moncada
 Were settled long ere Juan’s sire was born ;
 They were relations, and for them he had a
 Letter of introduction, which the morn
 Of his departure had been sent him by
 His Spanish friends for those in Italy.

XXV.

His suite consisted of three servants, and
A tutor, the licentiate Pedrillo,
Who several languages did understand,
But now lay sick and speechless on his pillow,
And, rocking in his hammock, long'd for land,
His head-ache being increased by every billow ;
And the waves oozing through the port-hole made
His berth a little damp, and him afraid.

XXVI.

'T was not without some reason, for the wind
Increased at night, until it blew a gale ;
And though 't was not much to a naval mind,
Some landsmen would have look'd a little pale.
For sailors are, in fact, a different kind :
At sunset they began to take in sail,
For the sky show'd it would come on to blow,
And carry away, perhaps, a mast or so.

XXVII.

At one o'clock, the wind with sudden shift^s
Threw the ship right into the trough of the sea,
Which struck her aft, and made an awkward rift,
Started the stern-post, also shatter'd the
Whole of her stern-frame, and ere she could lift
Herself from out her present jeopardy,
The rudder tore away : 't was time to sound
The pumps, and there were four feet water found.

XXVIII.

One gang of people instantly was put
Upon the pumps, and the remainder set
To get up part of the cargo, and what not,
But they could not come at the leak as yet ;
At last they did get at it really, but
Still their salvation was an even bet :
The water rush'd through in a way quite puzzling,
While they thrust sheets, shirts, jackets, bales of muslin,

XXIX.

Into the opening ; but all such ingredients
Would have been vain, and they must have gone down,
Despite of all their efforts and expedients,
But for the pumps : I'm glad to make them known
To all the brother-tars who may have need hence,
For fifty tons of water were upthrown
By them per hour ; and they had all been undone
But for the maker, Mr. Mann, of London.

XXX.

As day advanced, the weather seem'd to abate,
 And then the leak they reckon'd to reduce,
 And keep the ship afloat, though three feet yet
 Kept two hand and one chain-pump still in use.
 The wind blew fresh again : as it grew late
 A squall came on, and, while some guns broke loose,
 A gust—which all descriptive power transcends—
 Laid with one blast the ship on her beam-ends.

XXXI.

There she lay, motionless, and seem'd upset ;
 The water left the hold, and wash'd the decks,
 And made a scene men do not soon forget ;
 For they remember battles, fires, and wrecks,
 Or any other thing that brings regret,
 Or breaks their hopes, or hearts, or heads, or necks :
 Thus drownings are much talk'd of by the divers
 And swimmers who may chance to be survivors.

XXXII.

Immediately the masts were cut away,
 Both main and mizen ; first the mizen went,
 The main-mast follow'd : but the ship still lay
 Like a mere log, and baffled our intent.
 Foremast and bowsprit were cut down, and they
 Eased her at last (although we never meant
 To part with all till every hope was blighted),
 And then with violence the old ship righted.

XXXIII.

It may be easily supposed, while this
 Was going on, some people were unquiet ;
 That passengers would find it much amiss
 To lose their lives, as well as spoil their diet ;
 That even the able seaman, deeming his
 Days nearly o'er, might be disposed to riot,
 As upon such occasions tars will ask
 For grog, and sometimes drink rum from the cask.

XXXIV.

There 's nought, no doubt, so much the spirit calms
 As rum and true religion ; thus it was,
 Some plunder'd, some drank spirits, some sung psalms,
 The high wind made the treble, and as bass
 The hoarse harsh waves kept time ; fright cured the qualms
 Of all the luckless landmen's sea-sick maws :
 Strange sounds of wailing, blasphemy, devotion,
 Clamour'd in chorus to the roaring ocean.

XXXV.

Perhaps more mischief had been done, but for
 Our Juan, who, with sense beyond his years,
 Got to the spirit-room, and stood before
 It with a pair of pistols ; and their fears,
 As if death were more dreadful by his door
 Of fire than water, spite of oaths and tears,
 Kept still aloof the crew, who, ere they sunk,
 Thought it would be becoming to die drunk.⁵

XXXVI.

“ Give us more grog,” they cried, “ for it will be
 All one an hour hence.” Juan answer’d “ No !
 ’T is true that death awaits both you and me,
 But let us die like men, not sink below
 Like brutes :”—and thus his dangerous post kept he,
 And none liked to anticipate the blow ;
 And even Pedrillo, his most reverend tutor,
 Was for some rum a disappointed suitor.

XXXVII.

The good old gentleman was quite aghast,
 And made a loud and pious lamentation ;
 Repented all his sins, and made a last
 Irrevocable vow of reformation ;
 Nothing should tempt him more (this peril past)
 To quit his academic occupation,
 In cloisters of the classic Salamanca,
 To follow Juan’s wake like Sancho Panca.

XXXVIII.

But now there came a flash of hope once more ;
 Day broke, and the wind lull’d : the masts were gone,
 The leak increased ; shoals round her, but no shore,
 The vessel swam, yet still she held her own.
 They tried the pumps again, and though before
 Their desperate efforts seem’d all useless grown,
 A glimpse of sunshine set some hands to bale—
 The stronger pump’d, the weaker thrumm’d a sail.

XXXIX.

Under the vessel’s keel the sail was pass’d,
 And for the moment it had some effect ;
 But with a leak, and not a stick of mast,
 Nor rag of canvass, what could they expect ?
 But still ’t is best to struggle to the last,
 ’T is never too late to be wholly wreck’d :
 And though ’t is true that man can only die once,
 ’T is not so pleasant in the Gulf of Lyons.

XL.

There winds and waves had hurl'd them, and from thence,
 Without their will, they carried them away ;
 For they were forced with steering to dispense,
 And never had, as yet, a quiet day
 On which they might repose, or even commence
 A jury-mast or rudder, or could say
 The ship would swim an hour, which, by good luck,
 Still swam—though not exactly like a duck.

XLI.

The wind, in fact, perhaps was rather less,
 But the ship labour'd so, they scarce could hope
 To weather out much longer ; the distress
 Was also great with which they had to cope
 For want of water, and their solid mess
 Was scant enough : in vain the telescope
 Was used—nor sail nor shore appear'd in sight,
 Nought but the heavy sea, and coming night.

XLII.

Again the weather threaten'd,—again blew
 A gale, and in the fore and after-hold
 Water appear'd ; yet, though the people knew
 All this, the most were patient, and some bold,
 Until the chains and leathers were worn through
 Of all our pumps :—a wreck complete she roll'd,
 At mercy of the waves, whose mercies are
 Like human beings' during civil war.

XLIII.

Then came the carpenter, at last, with tears
 In his rough eyes, and told the captain he
 Could do no more : he was a man in years,
 And long had voyaged through many a stormy sea ;
 And if he wept at length, they were not fears
 That made his eyelids as a woman's be,
 But he, poor fellow, had a wife and children—
 Two things for dying people quite bewildering.

XLIV.

The ship was evidently settling now
 Fast by the head ; and, all distinction gone,
 Some went to prayers again, and made a vow
 Of candles to their saints—but there were none
 To pay them with ;⁶ and some look'd o'er the bow ;
 Some hoisted out the boats ; and there was one
 That begg'd Pedrillo for an absolution,
 Who told him to be damn'd—in his confusion.

XLV.

Some lash'd them in their hammocks, some put on⁷
 Their best clothes as if going to a fair;
 Some cursed the day on which they saw the sun,
 And gnash'd their teeth, and, howling, tore their hair;
 And others went on as they had begun,
 Getting the boats out, being well aware
 That a tight boat will live in a rough sea,
 Unless with breakers close beneath her lee.

XLVI.

The worst of all was, that in their condition,
 Having been several days in great distress,
 'T was difficult to get out such provision
 As now might render their long suffering less:
 Men, even when dying, dislike inanition;
 Their stock was damaged by the weather's stress:
 Two casks of biscuit and a keg of butter
 Were all that could be thrown into the cutter.

XLVII.

But in the long-boat they contrived to stow
 Some pounds of bread, though injured by the wet;
 Water, a twenty-gallon cask or so;
 Six flasks of wine; and they contrived to get
 A portion of their beef up from below,
 And with a piece of pork, moreover, met,
 But scarce enough to serve them for a luncheon;
 Then there was rum, eight gallons in a puncheon.

XLVIII.

The other boats, the yawl and pinnace, had
 Been stove in the beginning of the gale;
 And the long-boat's condition was but bad,
 As there were but two blankets for a sail,
 And one oar for a mast, which a young lad
 Threw in by good luck over the ship's rail;
 And two boats could not hold, far less be stored,
 To save one half the people then on board.

XLIX.

'T was twilight, for the sunless day went down
 Over the waste of waters; like a veil,
 Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose the frown
 Of one whose hate is mask'd but to assail,
 Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was shown,
 And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,
 And the dim desolate deep: twelve days had Fear
 Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

L.

Some trial had been making at a raft,
 With little hope in such a rolling sea,
 A sort of thing at which one would have laugh'd,⁸
 If any laughter at such times could be,
 Unless with people who too much have quaff'd,
 And have a kind of wild and horrid glee,
 Half epileptical and half hysterical :
 Their preservation would have been a miracle.

LI.

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hen-coops, spars,
 And all things, for a chance, had been cast loose,
 That still could keep afloat the struggling tars,
 For yet they strove, although of no great use :
 There was no light in heaven but a few stars ;
 The boats put off o'ercrowded with their crews ;
 She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,
 And, going down head foremost—sunk, in short.

LII.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell,
 Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave ;
 Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful yell,
 As eager to anticipate their grave ;
 And the sea yawn'd around her like a hell,
 And down she suck'd with her the whirling wave,
 Like one who grapples with his enemy,
 And strives to strangle him before he die.

LIII.

And first one universal shriek there rush'd,
 Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash
 Of echoing thunder ; and then all was hush'd,
 Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash
 Of billows ; but at intervals there gush'd,
 Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
 A solitary shriek—the bubbling cry
 Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

LIV.

The boats, as stated, had got off before,
 And in them crowded several of the crew ;
 And yet their present hope was hardly more
 Than what it had been, for so strong it blew,
 There was slight chance of reaching any shore ;
 And then they were too many, though so few—
 Nine in the cutter, thirty in the boat,
 Were counted in them when they got afloat.

LV.

All the rest perish'd ; near two hundred souls
 Had left their bodies ; and, what 's worse, alas !
 When over catholics the ocean rolls,
 They must wait several weeks before a mass
 Takes off one peck of purgatorial coals,
 Because, till people know what 's come to pass,
 They won't lay out their money on the dead—
 It costs three franks for every mass that 's said.

LVI.

Juan got into the long-boat, and there
 Contrived to help Pedrillo to a place ;
 It seem'd as if they had exchanged their care,
 For Juan wore the magisterial face
 Which courage gives, while poor Pedrillo's pair
 Of eyes were crying for their owner's case :
 Battista, though, (a name call'd shortly Tita)
 Was lost by getting at some aqua-vitæ.

LVII.

Pedro, his valet, too, he tried to save ;
 But the same cause, conducive to his loss,
 Left him so drunk, he jump'd into the wave,
 As o'er the cutter's edge he tried to cross,
 And so he found a wine-and-watery grave :
 They could not rescue him, although so close,
 Because the sea ran higher every minute,
 And for the boat—the crew kept crowding in it.

LVIII.

A small old spaniel,—which had been Don Jose's,
 His father's, whom he loved, as ye may think,
 For on such things the memory reposes
 With tenderness,—stood howling on the brink,
 Knowing, (dogs have such intellectual noses !)
 No doubt, the vessel was about to sink ;
 And Juan caught him up, and, ere he stepp'd
 Off, threw him in, then after him he leap'd.

LXIX.

He also stuff'd his money where he could
 About his person, and Pedrillo's too,
 Who let him do, in fact, whate'er he would,
 Not knowing what himself to say or do,
 As every rising wave his dread renew'd ;
 But Juan, trusting they might still get through,
 And deeming there were remedies for any ill,
 Thus re-embark'd his tutor and his spaniel.

LX.

'T was a rough night, and blew so stiffly yet,¹²
 That the sail was becalm'd between the seas,
 Though on the wave's high top too much to set,
 They dared not take it in for all the breeze ;
 Each sea curl'd o'er the stern, and kept them wet,
 And made them bale without a moment's ease,
 So that themselves as well as hopes were damp'd,
 And the poor little cutter quickly swamp'd.

LXI.

Nine souls more went in her : the long-boat still
 Kept above water, with an oar for mast,
 Two blankets stitch'd together, answering ill
 Instead of sail, were to the oar made fast ;
 Though every wave roll'd menacing to fill,
 And present peril all before surpass'd,
 They grieved for those who perish'd with the cutter,
 And also for the biscuit-casks and butter.

LXII.

The sun rose red and fiery, a sure sign
 Of the continuance of the gale : to run
 Before the sea, until it should grow fine,
 Was all that for the present could be done :
 A few tea-spoonfuls of their rum and wine
 Were served out to the people, who begun
 To faint, and damaged bread wet through the bags,
 And most of them had little clothes but rags.

LXIII.

They counted thirty, crowded in a space
 Which left scarce room for motion or exertion ;
 They did their best to modify their case :
 One half sate up, though numb'd with the immersion,
 While t' other half were laid down in their place,
 At watch and watch ; thus, shivering like the tertian
 Ague in its cold fit, they fill'd their boat,
 With nothing but the sky for a great coat.

LXIV.

'T is very certain the desire of life
 Prolongs it ; this is obvious to physicians,
 When patients, neither plagued with friends nor wife,
 Survive through very desperate conditions,
 Because they still can hope, nor shines the knife
 Nor shears of Atropos before their visions :
 Despair of all recovery spoils longevity,
 And makes men's miseries of alarming brevity.

LXV.

'T is said that persons living on annuities
 Are longer lived than others,—God knows why,
 Unless to plague the grantors,—yet so true it is,
 That some, I really think, *do* never die.
 Of any creditors the worst a Jew it is,
 And *that* 's their mode of furnishing supply :
 In my young days they lent me cash that way,
 Which I found very troublesome to pay.

LXVI.

'T is thus with people in an open boat :
 They live upon the love of life, and bear
 More than can be believed, or even thought,
 And stand, like rocks, the tempest's wear and tear ;
 And hardship still has been the sailor's lot,
 Since Noah's ark went cruising here and there ;
 She had a curious crew as well as cargo,
 Like the first old Greek privateer, the Argo.

LXVII.

But man is a carnivorous production,
 And must have meals, at least one meal a day ;
 He cannot live, like woodcocks, upon suction,
 But, like the shark and tiger, must have prey :
 Although his anatomical construction
 Bears vegetables in a grumbling way,
 Your labouring people think beyond all question,
 Beef, veal, and mutton, better for digestion.

LXVIII.

And thus it was with this our hapless crew ;
 For on the third day there came on a calm,
 And though at first their strength it might renew,
 And, lying on their weariness like balm,
 Lull'd them like turtles sleeping on the blue
 Of ocean, when they woke they felt a qualm,
 And fell all ravenously on their provision,
 Instead of hoarding it with due precision.

LXIX.

The consequence was easily foreseen—
 They ate up all they had, and drank their wine,
 In spite of all remonstrances, and then
 On what, in fact, next day were they to dine ?
 They hoped the wind would rise, these foolish men !
 And carry them to shore ; these hopes were fine,
 But, as they had but one oar, and that brittle,
 It would have been more wise to save their victual.

LXX.

The fourth day came, but not a breath of air,
 And ocean slumber'd like an unwean'd child :
 The fifth day, and their boat lay floating there,
 The sea and sky were blue, and clear, and mild—
 With their one oar (I wish they 'd had a pair)
 What could they do? and hunger's rage grew wild;
 So Juan's spaniel, spite of his entreating,
 Was kill'd, and portion'd out for present eating.

LXXI.

On the sixth day they fed upon his hide,
 And Juan, who had still refused, because
 The creature was his father's dog that died,
 Now feeling all the vulture in his jaws,
 With some remorse received (though first denied),
 As a great favour, one of the fore-paws,¹⁰
 Which he divided with Pedrillo, who
 Devour'd it, longing for the other too.

LXXII.

The seventh day, and no wind—the burning sun
 Blister'd and scorch'd, and, stagnant on the sea,
 They lay like carcasses; and hope was none,
 Save in the breeze that came not; savagely
 They glared upon each other—all was done,
 Water, and wine, and food,—and you might see
 The longings of the cannibal arise
 (Although they spoke not) in their wolfish eyes.

LXXIII.

At length one whisper'd his companion, who
 Whisper'd another, and thus it went round,
 And then into a hoarser murmur grew,
 An ominous, and wild, and desperate sound;
 And when his comrade's thought each sufferer knew,
 'T was but his own, suppress'd till now, he found.
 And out they spoke of lots for flesh and blood,
 And who should die to be his fellows' food.

LXXIV.

But ere they came to this, they that day shared
 Some leathern caps, and what remain'd of shoes;
 And then they look'd around them, and despair'd,
 And none to be the sacrifice would chuse;
 At length the lots were torn up and prepared,
 But of materials that much shock the muse—
 Having no paper, for the want of better,
 They took, by force, from Juan, Julia's letter.

LXXV.

The lots were made, and mark'd, and mix'd, and handed
 In silent horror, and their distribution
 Lull'd even the savage hunger which demanded,
 Like the Promethean vulture, this pollution :
 None in particular had sought or plann'd it,
 'T was nature gnaw'd them to this resolution,
 By which none were permitted to be neuter—
 And the lot fell on Juan's luckless tutor.

LXXVI.

He but requested to be bled to death :
 The surgeon had his instruments and bled
 Pedrillo ; and so gently ebb'd his breath,
 You hardly could perceive when he was dead.
 He died as born, a catholic in faith,
 Like most in the belief in which they 're bred,
 And first a little crucifix he kiss'd,
 And then held out his jugular and wrist.

LXXVII.

The surgeon, as there was no other fee,
 Had his first choice of morsels for his pains ;
 But, being thirstiest at the moment, he
 Preferr'd a draught from the fast-flowing veins :
 Part was divided, part thrown in the sea,
 And such things as the entrails and the brains
 Regaled two sharks, who follow'd o'er the billow—
 The sailors ate the rest of poor Pedrillo.

LXXVIII.

The sailors ate him, all save three or four,
 Who were not quite so fond of animal food ;
 To these was added Juan, who, before
 Refusing his own spaniel, hardly could
 Feel now his appetite increased much more ;
 'T was not to be expected that he should,
 Even in extremity of their disaster,
 Dine with them on his pastor and his master.

LXXIX.

'T was better that he did not ; for, in fact,
 The consequence was awful in the extreme,
 For they, who were most ravenous in the act,
 Went raging mad—Lord ! how they did blaspheme !
 And foam and roll, with strange convulsions rack'd,
 Drinking salt water like a mountain-stream,
 Tearing, and grinning, howling, screeching, swearing,
 And, with hyæna laughter, died despairing.

LXXX.

Their numbers were much thinn'd by this infliction,
 And all the rest were thin enough, Heaven knows;
 And some of them had lost their recollection,
 Happier than they who still perceived their woes;
 But others ponder'd on a new dissection,
 As if not warn'd sufficiently by those
 Who had already perish'd, suffering madly,
 For having used their appetites so sadly.

LXXXI.

And next they thought upon the master's mate,
 As fattest; but he saved himself, because,
 Besides being much averse from such a fate,
 There were some other reasons: the first was,
 He had been rather indisposed of late,
 And that which chiefly proved his saving clause,
 Was a small present made to him at Cadiz,
 By general subscription of the ladies.

LXXXII.

Of poor Pedrillo something still remain'd,
 But it was used sparingly,—some were afraid,
 And others still their appetites constrain'd,
 Or but at times a little supper made;
 All except Juan, who throughout abstain'd,
 Chewing a piece of bamboo, and some lead:
 At length they caught two boobies and a noddy,
 And then they left off eating the dead body.

LXXXIII.

And if Pedrillo's fate should shocking be,
 Remember Ugolino condescends
 To eat the head of his arch-enemy"
 The moment after he politely ends
 His tale; if foes be food in hell, at sea
 'T is surely fair to dine upon our friends,
 When shipwreck's short allowance grows too scanty,
 Without being much more horrible than Dante.

LXXXIV.

And the same night there fell a shower of rain,
 For which their mouths gaped, like the cracks of earth,
 When dried to summer dust; till taught by pain,
 Men really know not what good water's worth:
 If you had been in Turkey or in Spain,
 Or with a famish'd boat's-crew had your berth,
 Or in the desert heard the camel's bell,
 You'd wish yourself where Truth is—in a well.

LXXXV.

It pour'd down torrents, but they were no richer,
 Until they found a ragged piece of sheet,¹²
 Which served them as a sort of spongy pitcher,
 And when they deem'd its moisture was complete,
 They wrung it out, and, though a thirsty ditcher
 Might not have thought the scanty draught so sweet
 As a full pot of porter, to their thinking
 They ne'er till now had known the joys of drinking.

LXXXVI.

And their baked lips, with many a bloody crack,
 Suck'd in the moisture, which like nectar stream'd;
 Their throats were ovens, their swoln tongues were black,
 As the rich man's in hell, who vainly scream'd
 To beg the beggar, who could not rain back
 A drop of dew, when every drop had seem'd
 To taste of heaven: if this be true, indeed,
 Some christians have a comfortable creed.

LXXXVII.

There were two fathers in this ghastly crew,¹³
 And with them their two sons, of whom the one
 Was more robust and hardy to the view,
 But he died early; and when he was gone,
 His nearest messmate told his sire, who threw
 One glance on him, and said, "Heaven's will be done!
 I can do nothing," and he saw him thrown
 Into the deep, without a tear or groan.

LXXXVIII.

The other father had a weaklier child,
 Of a soft cheek, and aspect delicate;
 But the boy bore up long, and with a mild
 And patient spirit, held aloof his fate;
 Little he said, and now and then he smiled,
 As if to win a part from off the weight
 He saw increasing on his father's heart,
 With the deep deadly thought, that they must part.

LXXXIX.

And o'er him bent his sire, and never raised
 His eyes from off his face, but wiped the foam
 From his pale lips, and ever on him gazed;
 And when the wish'd-for shower at length was come,
 And the boy's eyes, which the dull film half glazed,
 Brighten'd, and for a moment seem'd to roam,
 He squeezed from out a rag some drops of rain
 Into his dying child's mouth—but in vain.

XC.

The boy expired—the father held the clay,
 And look'd upon it long, and when at last
 Death left no doubt, and the dead burthen lay
 Stiff on his heart, and pulse and hope were past,
 He watch'd it wistfully, until away
 'T was borne by the rude wave wherein 't was cast ;
 Then he himself sunk down, all dumb and shivering,
 And gave no signs of life, save his limbs quivering.

XCI.

Now overhead a rainbow, bursting through
 The scattering clouds, shone, spanning the dark sea,
 Resting its bright base on the quivering blue ;
 And all within its arch appear'd to be
 Clearer than that without ; and its wide hue
 Wax'd broad and waving, like a banner free,
 Then changed like to a bow that 's bent, and then
 Forsook the dim eyes of these shipwreck'd men.

XCII.

It changed, of course ; a heavenly cameleon,
 The airy child of vapour and the sun,
 Brought forth in purple, cradled in vermillion,
 Baptised in molten gold, and swathed in dun,
 Glittering like crescents o'er a Turk's pavilion,
 And blending every colour into one—
 Just like a black eye in a recent scuffle
 (For sometimes we must box without the muffle).

XCIII.

Our shipwreck'd seamen thought it a good omen—
 It is as well to think so now and then ;
 'T was an old custom of the Greek and Roman,
 And may become of great advantage when
 Folks are discouraged ; and most surely no men
 Had greater need to nerve themselves again
 Than these ; and so this rainbow look'd like hope—
 Quite a celestial kaleidoscope.

XCIV.

About this time a beautiful white bird,¹⁴
 Web-footed, not unlike a dove in size
 And plumage (probably it might have err'd
 Upon its course), pass'd oft before their eyes,
 And tried to perch, although it saw and heard
 The men within the boat, and in this guise
 It came and went, and flutter'd round them, till
 Night fell :—this seem'd a better omen still.

XCV.

But in this case I also must remark,
 'T was well this bird of promise did not perch,
 Because the tackle of our shatter'd bark
 Was not so safe for roosting as a church;
 And had it been the dove from Noah's ark,
 Returning there from her successful search,
 Which in their way that moment chanced to fall,
 They would have eat her, olive-branch and all.

XCVI.

With twilight it again came on to blow,
 But not with violence; the stars shone out,
 The boat made way; yet now they were so low,
 They knew not where nor what they were about;
 Some fancied they saw land, and some said "No!"¹⁵
 The frequent fog-banks gave them cause to doubt—
 Some swore that they heard breakers, others guns,
 And all mistook about the latter once.

XCVII.

As morning broke, the light wind died away,
 When he who had the watch sung out, and swore
 If 't was not land that rose with the sun's ray,
 He wish'd that land he never might see more:
 And the rest rubb'd their eyes, and saw a bay,
 Or thought they saw, and shaped their course for shore;
 For shore it was, and gradually grew
 Distinct, and high, and palpable to view.

XCVIII.

And then of these some part burst into tears,
 And others, looking with a stupid stare,
 Could not yet separate their hopes from fears,
 And seem'd as if they had no further care;
 While a few pray'd—(the first time for some years)—
 And at the bottom of the boat three were
 Asleep; they shook them by the hand and head,
 And tried to awaken them, but found them dead.

XCIX.

The day before, fast sleeping on the water,¹⁶
 They found a turtle of the hawk's-bill kind,
 And by good fortune, gliding softly, caught her,
 Which yielded a day's life, and to their mind
 Proved even still a more nutritious matter,
 Because it left encouragement behind:
 They thought that in such perils, more than chance
 Had sent them this for their deliverance.

C.

The land appear'd, a high and rocky coast,
 And higher grew the mountains as they drew,
 Set by a current, towards it : they were lost
 In various conjectures, for none knew
 To what part of the earth they had been toss'd,
 So changeable had been the winds that blew ;
 Some thought it was Mount Ætna, some the highlands
 Of Candia, Cyprus, Rhodes, or other islands.

CI.

Meantime the current, with a rising gale,
 Still set them onwards to the welcome shore,
 Like Charon's bark of spectres, dull and pale :
 Their living freight was now reduced to four ;
 And three dead, whom their strength could not avail
 To heave into the deep with those before,
 Though the two sharks still follow'd them, and dash'd
 The spray into their faces as they splash'd.

CII.

Famine, despair, cold, thirst, and heat had done
 Their work on them by turns, and thinn'd them to
 Such things, a mother had not known her son
 Amidst the skeletons of that gaunt crew ;
 By night chill'd, by day scorch'd, thus one by one
 They perish'd, until wither'd to these few,
 But chiefly by a species of self-slaughter,
 In washing down Pedrillo with salt water.

CIII.

As they drew nigh the land, which now was seen
 Unequal in its aspect here and there,
 They felt the freshness of its growing green,
 That waved in forest tops, and smooth'd the air,
 And fell upon their glazed eyes like a screen
 From glistening waves, and skies so hot and bare—
 Lovely seem'd any object that should sweep
 Away the vast, salt, dread, eternal deep.

CIV.

The shore look'd wild, without a trace of man,
 And girt by formidable waves ; but they
 Were mad for land, and thus their course they ran,
 Though right a-head the roaring breakers lay :
 A reef between them also now began
 To show its boiling surf and bounding spray ;
 But finding no place for their landing better,
 They ran the boat for shore, and upset her.

CV.

But in his native stream, the Guadalquivir,
 Juan to lave his youthful limbs was wont;
 And, having learn'd to swim in that sweet river,
 Had often turn'd the art to some account.
 A better swimmer you could scarce see ever;
 He could, perhaps, have pass'd the Hellespont,
 As once (a feat on which ourselves we prided)
 Leander, Mr. Ekenhead, and I did.¹⁷

CVI.

So, here, though faint, emaciated, and stark,
 He buoy'd his boyish limbs, and strove to ply
 With the quick wave, and gain, ere it was dark,
 The beach which lay before him, high and dry:
 The greatest danger here was from a shark,
 That carried off his neighbour by the thigh;
 As for the other two, they could not swim,
 So nobody arrived on shore but him.

CVII.

Nor yet had he arrived but for the oar,
 Which, providentially for him, was wash'd
 Just as his feeble arms could strike no more,
 And the hard wave o'erwhelm'd him as 't was dash'd
 Within his grasp; he clung to it, and sore
 The waters beat while he thereto was lash'd;
 At last, with swimming, wading, scrambling, he
 Roll'd on the beach, half senseless, from the sea.

CVIII.

There, breathless, with his digging nails he clung
 Fast to the sand, lest the returning wave,
 From whose reluctant roar his life he wrung,
 Should suck him back to her insatiate grave:
 And there he lay, full length, where he was flung,
 Before the entrance of a cliff-worn cave,
 With just enough of life to feel its pain,
 And deem that it was saved, perhaps in vain.

CIX.

With slow and staggering effort he arose,
 But sunk again upon his bleeding knee
 And quivering hand; and then he look'd for those
 Who long had been his mates upon the sea,
 But none of them appear'd to share his woes,
 Save one, a corpse from out the famish'd three,
 Who died two days before, and now had found
 An unknown barren beach for burial ground.

CX.

And, as he gazed, his dizzy brain spun fast,
 And down he sunk ; and as he sunk, the sand
 Swam round and round, and all his senses pass'd :
 He fell upon his side, and his stretch'd hand
 Droop'd dripping on the oar (their jury-mast),
 And, like a wither'd lily, on the land
 His slender frame and pallid aspect lay,
 As fair a thing as e'er was form'd of clay.

CXI.

How long in his damp trance young Juan lay
 He knew not, for the earth was gone for him,
 And time had nothing more of night nor day
 For his congealing blood, and senses dim ;
 And how this heavy faintness pass'd away
 He knew not, till each painful pulse and limb,
 And tingling vein seem'd throbbing back to life,
 For Death, though vanquish'd, still retired with strife.

CXII.

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,
 For all was doubt and dizziness : he thought
 He still was in the boat, and had but dozed,
 And felt again with his despair o'erwrought,
 And wish'd it death in which he had reposed ;
 And then once more his feelings back were brought,
 And slowly by his swimming eyes was seen
 A lovely female face of seventeen.

CXIII.

'T was bending close o'er his, and the small mouth
 Seem'd almost prying into his for breath ;
 And chafing him, the soft warm hand of youth
 Recall'd his answering spirits back from death ;
 And, bathing his chill temples, tried to soothe
 Each pulse to animation, till, beneath
 Its gentle touch and trembling care, a sigh
 To these kind efforts made a low reply.

CXIV.

Then was the cordial pour'd and mantle flung
 Around his scarce-clad limbs ; and the fair arm
 Raised higher the faint head which o'er it hung ;
 And her transparent cheek, all pure and warm,
 Pillow'd his death-like forehead ; then she wrung
 His dewy curls, long drench'd by every storm ;
 And watch'd with eagerness each throb that drew
 A sigh from his heaved bosom—and hers too.

CXV.

And lifting him with care into the cave,
 The gentle girl, and her attendant,—one
 Young, yet her elder, and of brow less grave,
 And more robust of figure,—then begun
 To kindle fire, and as the new flames gave
 Light to the rocks that roof'd them, which the sun
 Had never seen, the maid, or whatsoe'er
 She was, appear'd distinct, and tall, and fair.

CXVI.

Her brow was overhung with coins of gold,
 That sparkled o'er the auburn of her hair,
 Her clustering hair, whose longer locks were roll'd
 In braids behind, and, though her stature were
 Even of the highest for a female mould,
 They nearly reach'd her heel; and in her air
 There was a something which bespoke command,
 As one who was a lady in the land.

CXVII.

Her hair, I said, was auburn; but her eyes
 Were black as death, their lashes the same hue,
 Of downcast length, in whose silk shadow lies
 Deepest attraction, for when to the view
 Forth from its raven fringe the full glance flies,
 Ne'er with such force the swiftest arrow flew:
 'T is as the snake, late coil'd, who pours his length,
 And hurls at once his venom and his strength.

CXVIII.

Her brow was white and low, her cheeks' pure dye
 Like twilight rosy still with the set sun;
 Short upper lips! sweet lips! that make us sigh
 Ever to have seen such; for she was one
 Fit for the model of a statuary
 (A race of mere impostors, when all 's done—
 I've seen much finer women, ripe and real,
 Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal.

CXIX.

I'll tell you why I say so, for 't is just
 One should not rail without a decent cause:
 There was an Irish lady, to whose bust
 I ne'er saw justice done, and yet she was
 A frequent model; and if e'er she must
 Yield to stern Time and Nature's wrinkling laws,
 They will destroy a face which mortal thought
 Ne'er compass'd, nor less mortal chisel wrought).

CXX.

And such was she, the lady of the cave :
 Her dress was very different from the Spanish,
 Simple, and yet of colours not so grave ;
 For, as you know, the Spanish women banish
 Bright hues when out of doors, and yet, while wave
 Around them (what I hope will never vanish)
 The basquina and the mantilla, they
 Seem at the same time mystical and gay.

CXXI.

But with our damsel this was not the case :
 Her dress was many-colour'd, finely spun ;
 Her locks curl'd negligently round her face,
 But through them gold and gems profusely shone ;
 Her girdle sparkled, and the richest lace
 Flow'd in her veil, and many a precious stone
 Flash'd on her little hand ; but, what was shocking,
 Her small snow feet had slippers, but no stocking.

CXXII.

The other female's dress was not unlike,
 But of inferior materials : she
 Had not so many ornaments to strike,
 Her hair had silver only, bound to be
 Her dowry ; and her veil, in form alike,
 Was coarser ; and her air, though firm, less free ;
 Her hair was thicker, but less long ; her eyes
 As black, but quicker, and of smaller size.

CXXIII.

And these two tended him, and cheer'd him both
 With food and raiment, and those soft attentions,
 Which are (as I must own) of female growth,
 And have ten thousand delicate inventions ;
 They made a most superior mess of broth,
 A thing which poesy but seldom mentions,
 But the best dish that e'er was cook'd since Homer's
 Achilles order'd dinner for new comers.

CXXIV.

I'll tell you who they were, this female pair,
 Lest they should seem princesses in disguise ;
 Besides I hate all mystery, and that air
 Of clap-trap, which your recent poets prize ;
 And so, in short, the girls they really were
 They shall appear before your curious eyes,
 Mistress and maid ; the first was only daughter
 Of an old man who lived upon the water.

CXXV.

A fisherman he had been in his youth,
 And still a sort of fisherman was he :
 But other speculations were, in sooth,
 Added to his connexion with the sea,
 Perhaps, not so respectable, in truth :
 A little smuggling, and some piracy,
 Left him, at last, the sole of many masters
 Of an ill-gotten million of piastres.

CXXVI.

A fisher, therefore, was he—though of men,
 Like Peter the Apostle—and he fish'd
 For wandering merchant-vessels, now and then,
 And sometimes caught as many as he wish'd ;
 The cargoes he confiscated, and gain
 He sought in the slave-market, too, and dish'd
 Full many a morsel for that Turkish trade,
 By which, no doubt, a good deal may be made.

CXXVII.

He was a Greek, and on his isle had built
 (One of the wild and smaller Cyclades)
 A very handsome house from out his guilt,
 And there he lived exceedingly at ease.
 Heaven knows what cash he got, or blood he spilt,
 A sad old fellow was he, if you please,
 But this I know, it was a spacious building,
 Full of barbaric carving, paint, and gilding.

CXXVIII.

He had an only daughter call'd Haidee,
 The greatest heiress of the Eastern isles ;
 Besides, so very beautiful was she,
 Her dowry was as nothing to her smiles :
 Still in her teens, and like a lovely tree
 She grew to womanhood, and between whiles
 Rejected several suitors, just to learn
 How to accept a better in his turn.

CXXIX.

And walking out upon the beach, below
 The cliff, towards sunset, on that day she found,
 Insensible,—not dead, but nearly so,—
 Don Juan, almost famish'd, and half drown'd ;
 But, being naked, she was shock'd, you know,
 Yet deem'd herself in common pity bound,
 As far as in her lay, “ to take him in,
 A stranger,” dying, with so white a skin.

CXXX.

But taking him into her father's house
 Was not exactly the best way to save,
 But like conveying to the cat the mouse,
 Or people in a trance, into their grave ;
 Because the good old man had so much "*vous*,"
 Unlike the honest Arab thieves so brave,
 He would have hospitably cured the stranger,
 And sold him instantly when out of danger.

CXXXI.

And therefore, with her maid, she thought it best
 (A virgin always on her maid relies)
 To place him in the cave for present rest :
 And when, at last, he open'd his black eyes,
 Their charity increased about their guest ;
 And their compassion grew to such a size,
 It open'd half the turnpike-gates to heaven—
 (Saint Paul says 't is the toll which must be given).

CXXXII.

They made a fire, but such a fire as they
 Upon the moment could contrive with such
 Materials as were cast up round the bay,
 Some broken planks and oars, that to the touch
 Were nearly tinder, since so long they lay,
 A mast was almost crumbled to a crutch ;
 But, by God's grace, here wrecks were in such plenty,
 That there was fuel to have furnish'd twenty.

CXXXIII.

He had a bed of furs and a pelisse,
 For Haidee stripp'd her sables off to make
 His couch ; and that he might be more at ease,
 And warm, in case by chance he should awake,
 They also gave a petticoat a-piece,
 She and her maid, and promised by day-break
 To pay him a fresh visit, with a dish
 For breakfast, of eggs, coffee, bread, and fish.

CXXXIV.

And thus they left him to his lone repose :
 Juan slept like a top, or like the dead,
 Who sleep at last, perhaps (God only knows),
 Just for the present, and in his lull'd head
 Not even a vision of his former woes
 Throbb'd in accursed dreams, which sometimes spread
 Unwelcome visions of our former years,
 Till the eye, cheated, opens thick with tears.

CXXXV.

Young Juan slept all dreamless : but the maid
 Who smooth'd his pillow, as she left the den,
 Look'd back upon him, and a moment stay'd,
 And turn'd, believing that he call'd again.
 He slumber'd ; yet she thought, at least she said
 (The heart will slip even as the tongue and pen),
 He had pronounced her name—but she forgot
 That at this moment Juan knew it not.

CXXXVI.

And pensive to her father's house she went,
 Enjoining silence strict to Zoe, who
 Better than her knew what, in fact, she meant,
 She being wiser by a year or two :
 A year or two 's an age when rightly spent,
 And Zoe spent hers as most women do,
 In gaining all that useful sort of knowledge
 Which is acquired in nature's good old college.

CXXXVII.

The morn broke, and found Juan slumbering still
 Fast in his cave, and nothing clash'd upon
 His rest ; the rushing of the neighbouring rill,
 And the young beams of the excluded sun,
 Troubled him not, and he might sleep his fill ;
 And need he had of slumber yet, for none
 Had suffer'd more—his hardships were comparative
 To those related in my grand-dad's narrative.¹⁸

CXXXVIII.

Not so Haidee : she sadly toss'd and tumbled,
 And started from her sleep, and turning o'er,
 Dream'd of a thousand wrecks, o'er which she stumbled,
 And handsome corpses strew'd upon the shore ;
 And woke her maid so early that she grumbled,
 And call'd her father's old slaves up, who swore
 In several oaths—Armenian, Turk, and Greek,—
 They knew not what to think of such a freak.

CXXXIX.

But up she got, and up she made them get,
 With some pretence about the sun, that makes
 Sweet skies just when he rises, or is set ;
 And 't is, no doubt, a sight to see when breaks
 Bright Phœbus, while the mountains still are wet
 With mist, and every bird with him awakes,
 And night is flung off like a mourning suit
 Worn for a husband, or some other brute.

CXL.

I say, the sun is a most glorious sight,
 I've seen him rise full oft; indeed of late
 I have sat up on purpose all the night,
 Which hastens, as physicians say, one's fate;
 And so all ye, who would be in the right
 In health and purse, begin your day to date
 From day-break, and when coffin'd at fourscore,
 Engrave upon the plate, you rose at four.

CXLI.

And Haidee met the morning face to face;
 Her own was freshest, though a feverish flush
 Had dyed it with the headlong blood, whose race
 From heart to cheek is curb'd into a blush.
 Like to a torrent which a mountain's base,
 That overpowers some Alpine river's rush,
 Checks to a lake, whose waves in circles spread,
 Or the Red Sea—but the sea is not red.

CXLII.

And down the cliff the island virgin came,
 And near the cave her quick light footsteps drew,
 While the sun smiled on her with his first flame,
 And young Aurora kiss'd her lips with dew,
 Taking her for a sister; just the same
 Mistake you would have made on seeing the two,
 Although the mortal, quite as fresh and fair,
 Had all the advantage, too, of not being air.

CXLIII.

And when into the cavern Haidee stepp'd,
 All timidly, yet rapidly, she saw
 That like an infant Juan sweetly slept:
 And then she stopp'd, and stood as if in awe
 (For sleep is awful), and on tiptoe crept,
 And wrapp'd him closer, lest the air, too raw,
 Should reach his blood; then o'er him, still as death,
 Bent with hush'd lips that drank his scarce-drawn breath.

CXLIV.

And thus, like to an angel o'er the dying
 Who die in righteousness, she lean'd; and there
 All tranquilly the shipwreck'd boy was lying,
 As o'er him lay the calm and stirless air:
 But Zoe the meantime some eggs was frying,
 Since, after all, no doubt, the youthful pair
 Must breakfast, and betimes—lest they should ask it,
 She drew out her provision from the basket.

CXLV.

She knew that the best feelings must have victual,
 And that a shipwreck'd youth would hungry be ;
 Besides, being less in love, she yawn'd a little,
 And felt her veins chill'd by the neighbouring sea ;
 And so, she cook'd their breakfast to a tittle ;
 I can't say that she gave them any tea,
 But there were eggs, fruit, coffee, bread, fish, honey,
 With Scio wine,—and all for love, not money.

CXLVI.

And Zoe, when the eggs were ready, and
 The coffee made, would fain have waken'd Juan ;
 But Haidee stopp'd her with her quick small hand,
 And without word, a sign her finger drew on
 Her lip, which Zoe needs must understand ;
 And, the first breakfast spoil'd, prepared a new one,
 Because her mistress would not let her break
 That sleep which seem'd as it would ne'er awake.

CXLVII.

For still he lay, and on his thin worn cheek
 A purple hectic play'd, like dying day
 On the snow tops of distant hills ; the streak
 Of sufferance yet upon his forehead lay,
 Where the blue veins look'd shadowy, shrunk, and weak,
 And his black curls were dewy with the spray,
 Which weigh'd upon them yet, all damp and salt,
 Mix'd with the stony vapours of the vault.

CXLVIII.

And she bent o'er him, and he lay beneath,
 Hush'd as the babe upon its mother's breast,
 Droop'd as the willow when no winds can breathe,
 Lull'd like the depth of ocean when at rest,
 Fair as the crowning rose of the whole wreath,
 Soft as the callow cygnet in its nest ;
 In short, he was a very pretty fellow,
 Although his woes had turn'd him rather yellow.

CXLIX.

He woke and gazed, and would have slept again,
 But the fair face which met his eyes forbade
 Those eyes to close, though weariness and pain
 Had further sleep a further pleasure made ;
 For woman's face was never form'd in vain
 For Juan, so that even when he pray'd,
 He turn'd from grisly saints, and martyrs hairy,
 To the sweet portraits of the Virgin Mary.

CL.

And thus upon his elbow he arose,
 And look'd upon the lady in whose cheek
 The pale contended with the purple rose,
 As with an effort she began to speak;
 Her eyes were eloquent, her words would pose,
 Although she told him, in good modern Greek,
 With an Ionian accent, low and sweet,
 That he was faint, and must not talk, but eat.

CLI.

Now Juan could not understand a word,
 Being no Grecian; but he had an ear,
 And her voice was the warble of a bird,
 So soft, so sweet, so delicately clear,
 That finer, simpler music ne'er was heard;
 The sort of sound we echo with a tear,
 Without knowing why—an overpowering tone,
 Whence melody descends, as from a throne.

CLII.

And Juan gazed as one who is awoke
 By a distant organ, doubting if he be
 Not yet a dreamer, till the spell is broke
 By the watchman, or some such reality,
 Or by one's early valet's cursed knock;
 At least it is a heavy sound to me,
 Who like a morning slumber—for the night
 Shows stars and women in a better light.

CLIII.

And Juan, too, was help'd out from his dream,
 Or sleep, or whatsoe'er it was, by feeling
 A most prodigious appetite: the steam
 Of Zoe's cookery no doubt was stealing
 Upon his senses, and the kindling beam
 Of the new fire which Zoe kept up, kneeling
 To stir her viands, made him quite awake
 And long for food, but chiefly a beef-steak.

CLIV.

But beef is rare within these oxless isles;
 Goats' flesh there is, no doubt, and kid, and mutton,
 And when a holiday upon them smiles,
 A joint upon their barbarous spits they put on:
 But this occurs but seldom, between whiles,
 For some of these are rocks with scarce a hut on;
 Others are fair and fertile, among which
 This, though not large, was one of the most rich.

CLV.

I say that beef is rare, and can't help thinking
 That the old fable of the Minotaur—
 From which our modern morals, rightly shrinking,
 Condemn the royal lady's taste who wore
 A cow's shape for a mask—was only (sinking
 The allegory) a mere type, no more,
 That Pasiphae promoted breeding cattle,
 To make the Cretans bloodier in battle.

CLVI.

For we all know that English people are
 Fed upon beef—I won't say much of beer,
 Because 't is liquor only, and being far
 From this my subject, has no business here;—
 We know, too, they are very fond of war,
 A pleasure—like all pleasures—rather dear;
 So were the Cretans—from which I infer
 That beef and battles both were owing to her.

CLVII.

But to resume. The languid Juan raised
 His head upon his elbow, and he saw
 A sight on which he had not lately gazed,
 As all his latter meals had been quite raw,
 Three or four things for which the Lord he praised,
 And feeling still the famish'd vulture gnaw,
 He fell upon whate'er was offer'd, like
 A priest, a shark, an alderman, or pike.

CLVIII.

He ate, and he was well supplied; and she,
 Who watch'd him like a mother, would have fed
 Him past all bounds, because she smiled to see
 Such appetite in one she had deem'd dead;
 But Zoe, being older than Haidee,
 Knew (by tradition, for she ne'er had read)
 That famish'd people must be slowly nursed,
 And fed by spoonfuls, else they always burst.

CLIX.

And so she took the liberty to state,
 Rather by deeds than words, because the case
 Was urgent, that the gentleman, whose fate
 Had made her mistress quit her bed to trace
 The sea-shore at this hour, must leave his plate,
 Unless he wish'd to die upon the place—
 She snatch'd it, and refused another morsel,
 Saying, he had gorged enough to make a horse ill.

CLX.

Next they—he being naked, save a tatter'd
 Pair of scarce decent trowsers—went to work;
 And in the fire his recent rags they scatter'd,
 And dress'd him, for the present, like a Turk,
 Or Greek—that is, although it not much matter'd,
 Omitting turban, slippers, pistols, dirk,—
 They furnish'd him, entire, except some stitches,
 With a clean shirt, and very spacious breeches.

CLXI.

And then fair Haidee tried her tongue at speaking,
 But not a word could Juan comprehend,
 Although he listen'd so that the young Greek in
 Her earnestness would ne'er have made an end;
 And, as he interrupted not, went eking
 Her speech out to her *protégé* and friend,
 Till, pausing at the last her breath to take,
 She saw he did not understand Romaic.

CLXII.

And then she had recourse to nods, and signs,
 And smiles, and sparkles of the speaking eye,
 And read (the only book she could) the lines
 Of his fair face, and found, by sympathy,
 The answer eloquent, where the soul shines
 And darts in one quick glance a long reply;
 And thus in every look she saw express'd
 A world of words, and things at which she guess'd.

CLXIII.

And now, by dint of fingers and of eyes,
 And words repeated after her, he took
 A lesson in her tongue; but by surmise,
 No doubt, less of her language than her look,
 As he who studies fervently the skies
 Turns oftener to the stars than to his book,
 Thus Juan learn'd his alpha beta better
 From Haidee's glance than any graven letter.

CLXIV.

'T is pleasing to be school'd in a strange tongue
 By female lips and eyes—that is, I mean,
 When both the teacher and the taught are young,
 As was the case, at least, where I have been;¹⁹
 They smile so when one 's right, and when one 's wrong
 They smile still more, and then there intervene
 Pressure of hands, perhaps even a chaste kiss;—
 I learn'd the little that I know by this:

CLXV.

That is, some words of Spanish, Turk, and Greek ;
 Italian not at all, having no teachers ;
 Much English I cannot pretend to speak,
 Learning that language chiefly from its preachers,
 Barrow, South, Tillotson, whom every week
 I study, also Blair, the highest reachers
 Of eloquence in piety and prose—
 I hate your poets, so read none of those.

CLXVI.

As for the ladies, I have nought to say,
 A wanderer from the British world of fashion,²⁰
 Where I, like other “dogs, have had my day,”
 Like other men too, may have had my passion—
 But that, like other things, has pass'd away :
 And all her fools whom I *could* lay the lash on,
 Foes, friends, men, women, now are nought to me
 But dreams of what has been, no more to be.

CLXVII.

Return we to Don Juan. He begun
 To hear new words, and to repeat them ; but
 Some feelings, universal as the sun,
 Were such as could not in his breast be shut
 More than within the bosom of a nun :
 He was in love—as you would be, no doubt,
 With a young benefactress,—so was she
 Just in the way we very often see.

CLXVIII.

And every day by day-break—rather early
 For Juan, who was somewhat fond of rest—
 She came into the cave, but it was merely
 To see her bird reposing in his nest :
 And she would softly stir his locks so curly,
 Without disturbing her yet slumbering guest,
 Breathing all gently o'er his cheek and mouth,
 As o'er a bed of roses the sweet south.

CLXIX.

And every morn his colour freshlier came,
 And every day help'd on his convalescence.
 'T was well, because health in the human frame
 Is pleasant, besides being true love's essence ;
 For health and idleness to passion's flame
 Are oil and gunpowder ; and some good lessons
 Are also learnt from Ceres and from Bacchus,
 Without whom Venus will not long attack us.

CLXX.

While Venus fills the heart (without heart really
 Love, though good always, is not quite so good),
 Ceres presents a plate of vermicelli,
 For love must be sustain'd like flesh and blood,—
 While Bacchus pours out wine, or hands a jelly :
 Eggs, oysters too, are amatory food ;
 But who is their purveyor from above
 Heaven knows,—it may be Neptune, Pan, or Jove.

CLXXI.

When Juan woke, he found some good things ready,
 A bath, a breakfast, and the finest eyes
 That ever made a youthful heart less steady,
 Besides her maid's, as pretty for their size :
 But I have spoken of all this already—
 And repetition 's tiresome and unwise,—
 Well—Juan, after bathing in the sea,
 Came always back to coffee and Haidee.

CLXXII.

Both were so young, and one so innocent,
 That bathing pass'd for nothing ; Juan seem'd
 To her, as 't were the kind of being sent
 Of whom these two years she had nightly dream'd,
 A something to be loved, a creature meant
 To be her happiness, and whom she deem'd
 To render happy ; all who joy would win
 Must share it,—Happiness was born a twin.

CLXXIII.

It was such pleasure to behold him, such
 Enlargement of existence to partake
 Nature with him, to thrill beneath his touch,
 To watch his slumbering, and to see him wake,
 To live with him for ever were too much ;
 But then the thought of parting made her quake :
 He was her own, her ocean treasure, cast
 Like a rich wreck—her first love and her last.

CLXXIV.

And thus a moon roll'd on, and fair Haidee
 Paid daily visits to her boy, and took
 Such plentiful precautions, that still he
 Remain'd unknown within his craggy nook :
 At last her father's prows put out to sea,
 For certain merchantmen upon the look,
 Not as of yore to carry off an Io,
 But three Ragusan vessels, bound for Scio.

CLXXV.

Then came her freedom, for she had no mother,
 So that, her father being at sea, she was
 Free as a married woman, or such other
 Female, as where she likes may freely pass,
 Without even the incumbrance of a brother,
 The freest she that ever gazed on glass :
 I speak of christian lands in this comparison,
 Where wives, at least, are seldom kept in garrison.

CLXXVI.

Now she prolong'd her visits and her talk
 (For they must talk), and he had learnt to say
 So much as to propose to take a walk,—
 For little had he wander'd since the day
 On which, like a young flower snapp'd from the stalk,
 Drooping and dewy on the beach he lay,—
 And thus they walk'd out in the afternoon,
 And saw the sun set opposite the moon.

CLXXVII.

It was a wild and breaker-beaten coast,
 With cliffs above, and a broad sandy shore,
 Guarded by shoals and rocks as by a host,
 With here and there a creek, whose aspect wore
 A better welcome to the tempest-toss'd ;
 And rarely ceased the haughty billows' roar,
 Save on the dead long summer days, which make
 The outstretch'd ocean glitter like a lake.

CLXXVIII.

And the small ripple spilt upon the beach
 Scarcely o'erpass'd the cream of your champagne,
 When o'er the brim the sparkling bumpers reach,
 That spring-dew of the spirit ! the heart's rain !
 Few things surpass old wine ; and they may preach
 Who please,—the more because they preach in vain,—
 Let us have wine and women, mirth and laughter,
 Sermons and soda-water the day after.

CLXXIX.

Man, being reasonable, must get drunk ;
 The best of life is but intoxication :
 Glory, the grape, love, gold, in these are sunk
 The hopes of all men, and of every nation ;
 Without their sap, how branchless were the trunk
 Of life's strange tree, so fruitful on occasion :
 But to return,—get very drunk ; and when
 You wake with head-ache, you shall see what then.

CLXXX.

Ring for your valet—bid him quickly bring
 Some hock and soda-water, then you 'll know
 A pleasure worthy Xerxes the great king ;
 For not the blest sherbet, sublimed with snow,
 Not the first sparkle of the desert-spring,
 Nor Burgundy in all its sunset glow,
 After long travel, ennui, love, or slaughter,
 Vie with that draught of hock and soda-water.

CLXXXI.

The coast—I think it was the coast that I
 Was just describing—Yes, it was the coast—
 Lay at this period quiet as the sky,
 The sands untumbled, the blue waves untoss'd,
 And all was stillness, save the sea-bird's cry,
 And dolphin's leap, and little billow cross'd
 By some low rock or shelve that made it fret
 Against the boundary it scarcely wet.

CLXXXII.

And forth they wander'd, her sire being gone,
 As I have said, upon an expedition ;
 And mother, brother, guardian, she had none,
 Save Zoe, who, although with due precision
 She waited on her lady with the sun,
 Thought daily service was her only mission,
 Bringing warm water, wreathing her long tresses,
 And asking now and then for cast-off dresses.

CLXXXIII.

It was the cooling hour, just when the rounded
 Red sun sinks down behind the azure hill,
 Which then seems as if the whole earth it bounded,
 Circling all nature, hush'd, and dim, and still,
 With the far mountain-crescent half surrounded
 On one side, and the deep sea calm and chill
 Upon the o'her, and the rosy sky,
 With one star sparkling through it like an eye.

CLXXXIV.

And thus they wander'd forth, and hand in hand,
 Over the shining pebbles and the shells,
 Glided along the smooth and harden'd sand,
 And in the worn and wild receptacles
 Work'd by the storms, yet work'd as it were plann'd,
 In hollow halls, with sparry roofs and cells,
 They turn'd to rest : and, each clasp'd by an arm,
 Yielded to the deep twilight's purple charm.

CLXXXV.

They look'd up to the sky, whose floating glow
 Spread like a rosy ocean, vast and bright ;
 They gazed upon the glittering sea below,
 Whence the broad moon rose circling into sight ;
 They heard the waves splash, and the wind so low,
 And saw each other's dark eyes darting light
 Into each other—and, beholding this,
 Their lips drew near, and clung into a kiss ;

CLXXXVI.

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth, and love,
 And beauty, all concentrating like rays
 Into one focus kindled from above ;
 Such kisses as belong to early days,
 Where heart, and soul, and sense, in concert move,
 And the blood's lava, and the pulse a blaze,
 Each kiss a heart-quake,—for a kiss's strength,
 I think it must be reckon'd by its length.

CLXXXVII.

By length I mean duration ; theirs endured
 Heaven knows how long—no doubt they never reckon'd ;
 And if they had, they could not have secured
 The sum of their sensations to a second :
 They had not spoken ; but they felt allured,
 As if their souls and lips each other beckon'd,
 Which, being join'd, like swarming bees they clung—
 Their hearts the flowers from whence the honey sprung.

CLXXXVIII.

They were alone, yet not alone as they
 Who, shut in chambers, think it loneliness ;
 The silent ocean, and the star-light bay,
 The twilight glow, which momentarily grew less,
 The voiceless sands, and dropping caves, that lay
 Around them, made them to each other press,
 As if there were no life beneath the sky
 Save theirs, and that their life could never die.

CLXXXIX.

They fear'd no eyes nor ears on that lone beach,
 They felt no terrors from the night, they were
 All in all to each other : though their speech
 Was broken words, they *thought* a language there ;
 And all the burning tongues the passions teach
 Found in one sigh the best interpreter
 Of nature's oracle—first love,—that all
 Which Eve has left her daughters since her fall.

CXC.

Haidee spoke not of scruples, ask'd no vows,
 Nor offer'd any; she had never heard
 Of plight and promises to be a spouse,
 Or perils by a loving maid incurr'd;
 She was all which pure ignorance allows,
 And flew to her young mate like a young bird;
 And, never having dreamt of falsehood, she
 Had not one word to say of constancy.

CXCI.

She loved, and was beloved—she adored,
 And she was worshipp'd; after nature's fashion,
 Their intense souls, into each other pour'd,
 If souls could die, had perish'd in that passion;
 But by degrees their senses were restored,
 Again to be o'ercome, again to dash on;
 And, beating 'gainst *his* bosom, Haidee's heart
 Felt as if never more to beat apart.

CXCII.

Alas! they were so young, so beautiful,
 So lonely, loving, helpless, and the hour
 Was that in which the heart is always full,
 And, having o'er itself no further power,
 Prompts deeds eternity cannot annul,
 But pays off moments in an endless shower
 Of hell-fire—all prepared for people giving
 Pleasure or pain to one another living.

CXCIII.

Alas! for Juan and Haidee! they were
 So loving and so lovely—till then never,
 Excepting our first parents, such a pair
 Had run the risk of being damn'd for ever;
 And Haidee, being devout as well as fair,
 Had, doubtless, heard about the Stygian river,
 And hell and purgatory—but forgot
 Just in the very crisis she should not.

CXCIV.

They look upon each other, and their eyes
 Gleam in the moon-light; and her white arm clasps
 Round Juan's head, and his around hers lies
 Half buried in the tresses which it grasps;
 She sits upon his knee, and drinks his sighs,
 He hers, until they end in broken gasps;
 And thus they form a group that's quite antique,
 Half naked, loving, natural, and Greek.

CXCIV.

And when those deep and burning moments passed,
 And Juan sunk to sleep within her arms,
 She slept not, but all tenderly, though fast,
 Sustain'd his head upon her bosom's charms,
 And now and then her eye to heaven is cast,
 And then on the pale cheek her breast now warms,
 Pillow'd on her o'erflowing heart, which pants
 With all it granted and with all it grants.

CXCVI.

An infant when it gazes on a light,
 A child the moment when it drains the breast,
 A devotee when soars the host in sight,
 An Arab with a stranger for a guest,
 A sailor, when the prize has struck in fight,
 A miser filling his most hoarded chest,
 Feel rapture ; but not such true joy are reaping
 As they who watch o'er what they love while sleeping.

CXCVII.

For there it lies so tranquil, so beloved,
 All that it hath of life with us is living ;
 So gentle, stirless, helpless, and unmoved,
 And all unconscious of the joy 't is giving,
 All it hath felt, inflicted, pass'd, and proved,
 Hush'd into depths beyond the watcher's diving ;
 There lies the thing we love with all its errors,
 And all its charms, like death without its terrors.

CXCVIII.

The lady watch'd her lover—and that hour
 Of love's and night's, and ocean's solitude,
 O'erflow'd her soul with their united power ;
 Amidst the barren sand and rocks so rude
 She and her wave-worn love had made their bower,
 Where nought upon their passion could intrude,
 And all the stars that crowded the blue space
 Saw nothing happier than her glowing face.

CXCIX.

Alas ! the love of women ! it is known
 To be a lovely and a fearful thing ;
 For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,
 And if 't is lost, life hath no more to bring
 To them but mockeries of the past alone,
 And their revenge is as the tiger's spring,
 Deadly, and quick, and crushing ; yet as real
 Torture is theirs—what they inflict they feel.

CC.

They 're right ; for man, to man so oft unjust,
 Is always so to women ; one sole bond
 Awaits them, treachery is all their trust ;
 Taught to conceal, their bursting hearts despond
 Over their idol, till some wealthier lust
 Buys them in marriage—and what rests beyond ?
 A thankless husband, next a faithless lover,
 Then dressing, nursing, praying, and all 's over.

CCI.

Some take a lover, some take drains or prayers,
 Some mind their household, others dissipation,
 Some run away, and but exchange their cares,
 Losing the advantage of a virtuous station ;
 Few changes e'er can better their affairs,
 Theirs being an unnatural situation,
 From the dull palace to the dirty hovel :
 Some play the devil, and then write a novel."

CCII.

Haidee was nature's bride, and knew not this ;
 Haidee was passion's child, born where the sun
 Showers triple light, and scorches even the kiss
 Of his gazelle-eyed daughters ; she was one
 Made but to love, to feel that she was his
 Who was her chosen : what was said or done
 Elsewhere was nothing—She had nought to fear,
 Hope, care, nor love beyond ; her heart beat *here*.

CCIII.

And oh ! that quickening of the heart, that beat !
 How much it costs us ! yet each rising throb
 Is in its cause as its effect so sweet,
 That wisdom, ever on the watch to rob
 Joy of its alchymy, and to repeat
 Fine truths ; even conscience, too, has a tough job
 To make us understand each good old maxim,
 So good—I wonder Castlereagh don't tax 'em.

CCIV.

And now 't was done—on the lone shore were plighted
 Their hearts ; the stars, the nuptial torches, shed
 Beauty upon the beautiful they lighted :
 Ocean their witness, and the cave their bed,
 By their own feelings hallow'd and united,
 Their priest was solitude, and they were wed ;
 And they were happy, for to their young eyes
 Each was an angel, and earth paradise.



CCV.

Oh Love ! of whom great Cæsar was the suitor
 Titus the master, Antony the slave,
 Horace, Catullus scholars, Ovid tutor,
 Sappho the sage blue-stocking, in whose grave
 All those may leap who rather would be neuter—
 (Leucadia's rock still overlooks the wave)—
 Oh Love ! thou art the very god of evil,
 For, after all, we cannot call thee devil.

CCVI.

Thou mak'st the chaste connubial state precarious,
 And jestest with the brows of mightiest men :
 Cæsar and Pompey, Mahomet, Belisarius,
 Have much employ'd the Muse of history's pen ;
 Their lives and fortunes were extremely various,
 Such worthies time will never see again :—
 Yet to these four in three things the same luck holds,
 They all were heroes, conquerors, and cuckolds.

CCVII.

Thou mak'st philosophers : there 's Epicurus
 And Aristippus, a material crew !
 Who to immoral courses would allure us
 By theories quite practicable too ;
 If only from the devil they would insure us,
 How pleasant were the maxim (not quite new),
 " Eat, drink, and love, what can the rest avail us ?"
 So said the royal sage Sardanapalus."

CCVIII.

But Juan ! had he quite forgotten Julia ?
 And should he have forgotten her so soon ?
 I can't but say it seems to me most truly a
 Perplexing question ; but, no doubt, the moon
 Does these things for us, and whenever newly a
 Palpitation rises, 't is her boon ;
 Else how the devil is it that fresh features
 Have such a charm for us poor human creatures ?

CCIX.

I hate inconstancy—I loathe, detest,
 Abhor, condemn, abjure the mortal made
 Of such quicksilver clay, that in his breast
 No permanent foundation can be laid :
 Love, constant love, has been my constant guest,
 And yet last night, being at a masquerade,
 I saw the prettiest creature, fresh from Milan,
 Which gave me some sensations like a villain.

CCX.

But soon philosophy came to my aid,
 And whisper'd "think of every sacred tie!"
 "I will, my dear philosophy!" I said;
 "But then her teeth, and then, oh heaven! her eye!
 I'll just inquire if she be wife or maid,
 Or neither—out of curiosity."
 "Stop!" cried philosophy, with air so Grecian
 (Though she was mask'd then as a fair Venetian)—

CCXI.

"Stop!" so I stopp'd.—But to return: that which
 Men call inconstancy is nothing more
 Than admiration due where nature's rich
 Profusion with young beauty covers o'er
 Some favour'd object; and as in the niche
 A lovely statue we almost adore,
 This sort of adoration of the real
 Is but a heightening of the "beau idéal."

CCXII.

'T is the perception of the beautiful,
 A fine extension of the faculties,
 Platonic, universal, wonderful,
 Drawn from the stars, and filter'd through the skies,
 Without which life would be extremely dull;
 In short, it is the use of our own eyes,
 With one or two small senses added, just
 To hint that flesh is form'd of fiery dust.

CCXIII.

Yet 't is a painful feeling, and unwilling,
 For, surely, if we always could perceive
 In the same object graces quite as killing
 As when she rose upon us like an Eve,
 'T would save us many a heart-ache, many a shilling
 (For we must get them any how, or grieve);
 Whereas, if one sole lady pleased for ever,
 How pleasant for the heart, as well as liver!

CCXIV.

The heart is like the sky, a part of heaven,
 But changes night and day too, like the sky;
 Now o'er it clouds and thunder must be driven,
 And darkness and destruction, as on high;
 But when it hath been scorch'd, and pierced, and riven,
 Its storms expire in water-drops; the eye
 Pours forth at last the heart's blood turn'd to tears,
 Which make the English climate of our years.

CCXV.

The liver is the lazaret of bile,
 But very rarely executes its function,
 For the first passion stays there such a while
 That all the rest creep in and form a junction
 Like knots of vipers on a dunghill's soil—
 Rage, fear, hate, jealousy, revenge, compunction,
 So that all mischiefs spring up from this entrail,
 Like earthquakes from the hidden fire call'd "central."

CCXVI.

In the mean time, without proceeding more
 In this anatomy, I 've finish'd now
 Two hundred and odd stanzas as before,
 That being about the number I 'll allow
 Each canto of the twelve, or twenty-four ;
 And, laying down my pen, I make my bow,
 Leaving Don Juan and Haidee to plead
 For them and theirs with all who deign to read.^s

NOTES TO CANTO II.

Note 1. Stanza vii.

Fazzioli—literally, little handkerchiefs—the veils most availing of St. Mark.

Note 2. Stanza xxiv.

In the year 1790, while Lord Byron was the pupil of Dr. Glennie, at Dulwich, among the books that lay accessible to the boys was a pamphlet, entitled "Narrative of the Shipwreck of the Juno on the Coast of Arracan, in the Year 1795." The pamphlet attracted but little public attention; but, among the young students of Dulwich Grove it was a favourite study; and the impression which it left on the retentive mind of Byron may have had some share, perhaps, in suggesting that curious research though all the various accounts of Shipwrecks upon record, by which he prepared himself to depict, with such power, a scene of the same description in Don Juan. As to the charge of plagiarism brought against him by some scribblers of the day, for so doing,—with as much justice might the Italian author, who wrote a Discourse on the Military Science displayed by Tasso in his battles, have reproached that poet with the sources from which he drew his knowledge;—with as much justice might Puységur and Segrais, who have pointed out the same merit in Homer and Virgil, have withheld their praise, because the science on which this merit was founded, must have been derived by the skill and industry of these poets from others. So little was Tasso ashamed of those casual imitations of other poets which are so often branded as plagiarisms, that, in his Commentary on his Rime, he takes pains to point out whatever coincidences of this kind occur in his own verses.—MOORE.

"With regard to the charges about the Shipwreck, I think that I told you and Mr. Hobhouse, years ago, that there was not a single circumstance of it not taken from fact; not, indeed, from any single shipwreck, but all from actual facts of different wrecks."—Lord B. to Mr. Murray.

Note 3. Stanza xxvii—xxix.

"Night came on worse than the day had been: and a sudden shift of wind, about midnight, threw the ship into the trough of the sea, which struck her ast, tore away the rudder, started the stern-post, and shattered the whole of her stern frame. The pumps were immediately sounded, and in the course of a few minutes the water had increased to four feet."—Loss of the Hercules.

"One gang was instantly put on them, and the remainder of the people employed in getting up rice from the run of the ship, and heaving it over, to come at the leak, if possible. After three or four hundred bags were thrown into the sea, we did get at it, and found the water rushing into the ship with astonishing rapidity; therefore we thrust sheets, shirts, jackets, bales of muslin, and every thing of the like description that could be got, into the opening."—Ibid.

"Notwithstanding the pumps discharged fifty tons of water an hour, the ship certainly must have gone down, had not our expedients been attended with some success. The pumps, to the excellent construction of which I owe the preservation of my life, were made by Mr. Mann of London."—Ibid.

Note 4. Stanza xxx—xxxii.

"As the next day advanced, the weather appeared to moderate, the men con-

tinued incessantly at the pumps, and every exertion was made to *keep the ship afloat*. Scarce was this done, when *a gust, exceeding in violence every thing of the kind I had ever seen, or could conceive, laid the ship on her beam ends.*"—*Loss of the Centaur.*

"The ship lay motionless, and, to all appearance, irrevocably upset. The water forsook the hold, and appeared between decks."—*Ibid.*

"Immediate directions were given to cut away the main and mizen masts, trusting, when the ship righted, to be able to wear her. On cutting one or two lanyards, the mizen-mast went first over, but without producing the smallest effect on the ship, and, on cutting the lanyard of one shroud, the main-mast followed. I had the mortification to see the foremast and bowsprit also go over. On this, the ship immediately righted with great violence."—*Ibid.*

Note 5. Stanza xxxv.—xliv.

"A midshipman was appointed to guard the spirit-room, to repress that desire of a devoted crew to die in a state of intoxication. The sailors, though in other respects orderly in conduct, here pressed eagerly upon him."—*Loss of the Abergavenny.*

"'Give us some grog,' they exclaimed, 'it will be all one an hour hence.'—'I know we must die,' replied the gallant officer, coolly, 'but let us die like men!'—armed with a brace of pistols he kept his post, even while the ship was sinking."—*Ibid.*

"However, by great exertion of the chain-pump, we held our own. All who were not seamen by profession, had been employed in thrumming a sail."—*Ibid.*

"—which was passed under the ship's bottom, and I thought had some effect."—*Ibid.*

"The ship laboured so much, that I could scarce hope she would swim till morning: our sufferings were very great for want of water."—*Ibid.*

"The weather again threatened, and by noon it blew a storm. The ship laboured greatly; the water appeared in the fore and after hold. The leathers were nearly consumed, and the chains of the pumps, by constant exertion, and the friction of the coils, were rendered almost useless."—*Ibid.*

"At length, the carpenter came up from below, and told the crew, who were working at the pumps, he could do no more for them. Seeing their efforts useless, many of them burst into tears, and wept like children."—*Ibid.*

"I perceived the ship settling by the head. It was not in my power to encourage the ship's company any longer with a prospect of safety."—*Ibid.*

Note 6. Stanza xlv.

The delightful colloquy of Erasmus, entitled "Naufragium," must, as it is obvious from Lord Byron's numerous pencilmarks on his own copy of that author's Dialogues, have been much in his hands, when composing this extraordinary description of the Shipwreck. The following passage has a particular coincidence with stanza xlv.

"Aderat Anglus quidam, qui promittebat montes aureos Virgini Walsamgamicæ, si vivus attigisset terram: alii multa promittebant ligno crucis, quod esset in tali loco; alii rursum quod esset in tali loco. Unum audiui, non sine risu, qui clara voce, ne non exaudiretur, polliceretur Christophoro, qui est Lutetiæ in summo templo, mons verius quam statua, *cereum tantum quantus esset ipse*. Hæc cum vociferans quantum poterat, identidem inculcaret, qui forte proximus assistebat illi notus, cubito tetigit eum, ac submonuit: Vide quid pollicearis: etiamsi rerum omnium tuarum auctionem facias, non fueris solvendo. Tum ille, voce jam pressiore, ne videlicet exaudiret Christophorus: Tace, inquit, fatue! An credis me ex animi sententia loqui? Si semel contigero terram, non daturas sum illi candelam sebaceam!"

Note 7. Stanza xlv—xlvi.

Some appeared perfectly resigned, went to their hammocks, and desired their messmates to lash them in; others were for securing themselves to gratings and

small rats; but the most predominant idea was that of *putting on their best and cleanest clothes*. The boats were got over the side."—*Abergavenny*.

"Eight bags of rice, *six flasks of wine*, and a *small quantity of salted beef and pork*, were put into the long-boat, as provisions for the whole."—*Wreck of the Sydney*.

"The *yawl* was stove alongside and sunk."—*Centaur*.

"One *oar* was erected for a *main-mast*, and the other bent to the breadth of the *blankets* for a sail."—*Loss of the Wellington Transport*.

Note 8. Stanza l—lviii.

"As *rafts* had been mentioned by the carpenter, I thought it right to *make the attempt*. It was impossible for any man to deceive himself with the hopes of being saved on a raft in such a sea as this."—*Centaur*.

"*Spars, booms, hencoops*, and *every thing* buoyant, were therefore *cast loose*, that the men might have some chance to save themselves; for the boats were at some distance."—*Loss of the Pandora*.

"We had scarcely quitted the ship. when she gave a heavy *lurch to port*, and then went down, *head foremost*."—*Loss of the Lady Hobart Packet*.

"At this instant, one of the officers told the captain she was going down, and bidding him farewell, leapt overboard: the crew had just time to *leap overboard*, with they did, uttering a *most dreadful yell*."—*Pandora*.

"The boat, being fastened to the rigging, was no sooner cleared of the greatest part of the water, than a dog of mine came to me running along the gunwale. I took him in."—*Shipwreck of the Betsey*.

Note 9. Stanza lx—lxx.

"It blew a violent storm, so that between the seas the sail was becalmed; and when *on the top of the wave*, it was *too much to be set*, but we could not venture to take it in, for we were in very imminent danger and distress; *the sea curling over the stern* of the boat, which obliged us to *bale with all our might*."—BLIGH'S *Open Boat Navigation*.

"Before it was dark, a *blanket* was discovered in the boat. This was immediately bent to one of the stretchers, and under it, as a *sail*, we scudded all night, in expectation of being swallowed by *every wave*."—*Centaur*.

"The *sun rose red and fiery*, a *sure indication of a severe gale of wind*.—We could do nothing more than run before the sea.—I served a *tea-spoonful of rum* to every person. The bread we found was *damaged* and rotten."—BLIGH.

"As our lodging was very wretched and confined for want of room, I endeavoured to remedy this defect, by putting ourselves *at watch and watch*; so that *one half* always sat up, while the other half *lay down* in the bottom of the boat, with *nothing to cover us but the heavens*."—*Id.*

"The fourth day came, and not a breath of air," &c.—*Id.*

Note 10. Stanza lxxi—lxxx.

Now, however, when Mr. Byron was at home with his dog, a party came to tell him their necessities were such that they must eat the dog or starve. In spite of Mr. Byron's desire to preserve the faithful animal, they took him by force and killed him. Thinking he was entitled to a share, he partook of their repast. Three weeks afterwards, recollecting the spot where the dog was killed, he went to it, and was glad to make a meal of the paws and skin."—COMMODORE BYRON'S *Narrative*.

"Being driven to distress for want of food, they *soaked their shoes*, and two *hairy caps* which were among them, in the water; which being rendered soft, each partook of them. But day after day having passed, and the cravings of hunger pressing hard upon them, they fell upon the horrible and dreadful expedient of eating each other; and in order to prevent any contention about who should become the food of the others, they cast lots to determine the sufferer."—*Sufferings of the Crew of the Thomas*.

"*The lots were drawn*: the captain, summoning all his strength, wrote upon slips of paper the name of each man, folded them up, put them into a hat, and shook them together. The crew, meanwhile, preserved *an awful silence*; each eye was fixed and each mouth open, while terror was strongly impressed upon every countenance. The unhappy person, with manly fortitude, resigned himself to his miserable associates."—*Famine in the American Ship Peggy*.

"*He requested to be bled to death, the surgeon* being with them, and having *his case of instruments* in his pocket when he quitted the ship."—*Thomas*.

"No sooner had the fatal instrument touched the vein, than the operator applied his parched lips, and *drank the blood as it flowed*, while the rest anxiously watched the victim's departing breath, that they might proceed to satisfy the hunger which preyed upon them to so frightful a degree.—*Ibid*.

"Those who glutted themselves with human flesh and gore, and whose stomachs retained the unnatural food, soon perished with *raging insanity*."—*Ibid*.

"Another expedient we had frequent recourse to, finding it supplied our mouths with temporary moisture, was *chewing* any substance we could find, generally a bit of canvass, or even *lead*."—*Shipwreck of the Juno*.

"On the 25th, at noon, we caught *a noddy*. I divided it into eighteen portions. In the evening we caught *two boobies*."—BLIGH.

Note 11. Stanza lxxxiii.

"Quando ebbe detto ciò, con gli occhi torti
Riprese il teschio misero co' denti,
Che furo all' osso, come d' un ean forti."—*Divina Commedia*.

Note 12. Stanza lxxxv.

"In the evening there came on a squall, which brought the most seasonable relief, as it was accompanied with *heavy rain*: we had no means of catching it, but by spreading out our clothes; catching the drops as they fell, or *squeezing them out* of our clothes."—*Centaur*.

Note 13. Stanza lxxxvii—xc.

"I particularly remember the following instances:—Mr. Wade's boy, a *stout healthy lad, died early*, and almost without a groan; while another, of the same age, but of a less promising appearance, held out much longer. Their fathers were both in the fore-top, when the boys were taken ill. Wade, hearing of his son's illness, answered, with indifference, that '*he could do nothing for him*,' and left him to his fate."—*Juno*.

"*The other father* hurried down. By that time only three or four planks of the quarter-deck remained, just over the weather-quarter gallery. To this spot the unhappy man led his son, making him fast to the rail, to prevent his being washed away."—*Ibid*.

"Whenever the *boy was seized* with a fit of retching, the father lifted him up and *wiped away the foam from his lips*; and if a *shower came*, he made him open his mouth to *receive the drops*, or gently *squeezed them into it from a rag*."—*Ibid*.

"In this affecting situation, both remained four or five days, till *the boy expired*. The unfortunate parent, as if unwilling to believe the fact, raised the body, looked *wistfully* at it, and when he could no longer *entertain any doubt*, watched it in silence *until it was carried off by sea*; then wrapping himself in a piece of canvass, *sunk down*, and rose no more; though he must have lived two days longer, as we judged from the *quivering of his limbs*, when a wave broke over him."—*Ibid*.

Note 14. Stanza xciv.

"*About this time a beautiful white bird, web-footed, and not unlike a dove in size and plumage*, hovered over the mast-head of the cutter, and, notwithstanding the pitching of the boat, frequently *attempted to perch on it*, and continued to *flutter there till dark*. Trifling as this circumstance may appear, it was considered by us all as a *propitious omen*."—*Loss of the Lady Hobart Packet*.

Note 15. Stanza xevi—xcviii.

"I found it necessary to caution the people against being deceived by the *appearance of land*, or calling out till they were convinced of the reality, more especially as *fog-banks* are often mistaken for land: several of the poor fellows nevertheless repeatedly exclaimed *they heard breakers*, and some the *firing of guns*."—*Lady Hobart*.

"At length one of them broke into a most immoderate swearing fit of joy, which I could not restrain, and declared, that *he had never seen land in his life, if what he now saw was not land*."—*Centaur*.

"The joy at a speedy relief affected us all in a most remarkable way. Many burst into tears; some looked at each other with a stupid stare, as if doubtful of the reality of what they saw; while several were in such a lethargic condition, that no animating words could rouse them to exertion. At this affecting period, I proposed offering up our solemn thanks to Heaven for the miraculous deliverance."—*Lady Hobart*.

Note 16. Stanza xcix—civ.

"After having suffered the horrors of hunger and thirst for many days, they providentially took a *small turtle whilst floating asleep on the surface of the water*."—*Thomas*.

"Our bodies were nothing but skin and bones, our limbs were full of sores, and we were clothed in rags. An indifferent spectator would have been at a loss which most to admire, the eyes of famine sparkling at immediate relief, or the horror of their preservers at the sight of so many spectres, whose ghastly countenances, if the cause had been unknown, would rather have excited terror than pity."—*BLIGH*.

"They discovered land *right ahead*, and steered for it. There being a very heavy surf, they endeavoured to turn the boat's head to it, which, from weakness, they were unable to complete, and soon afterwards *the boat upset*."—*Escape of Deserters from St. Helena*.

Note 17. Stanza cv.

See vol. ii, p. 406, note, and *MOORE'S Notices*, vol. i, pag. 168.

Note 18. Stanza cxxxvii.

Entitled "A Narrative of the Honourable John Byron (Commodore in a late expedition round the world), containing an account of the great distresses suffered by himself and his companions on the coast of Patagonia, from the year 1740, till their arrival in England, 1746; written by Himself." This narrative, one of the most interesting that ever appeared, was published in 1768.

Note 19. Stanza elxiv.

When at Seville in 1809, Lord Byron lodged in the house of two unmarried ladies; and in his diary he describes himself as having made earnest love to the younger of them, with the help of a dictionary. "For some time," he says, "I went on prosperously, both as a linguist and a lover, till, at length, the lady took a fancy to a ring which I wore, and set her heart on my giving it to her, as a pledge of my sincerity. This, however, could not be;—any thing but the ring, I declared, was at her service, and much more than its value,—but the ring itself I had made a vow never to give away."

Note 20. Stanza cixvi.

"In 1813, I formed, in the fashionable world of London, an item, a fraction, the segment of a circle, the unit of a million, the nothing of something. I had been the lion of 1812."—*B. Diary*, 1821.

Note 21. Stanza cci.

Lady Caroline Lamb was supposed by Lord Byron to have alluded to him in her novel of "Glenarvon," published in 1816.—*E*.

Note 22. Stanza ccvii.

See vol. iii, p. 156, and p. 228, note 3.

Note 23. Stanza ccxvi.

We think our readers will be gratified by finding, in this place, some of the most striking passages of the Poet's own letters, concerning the circumstances under which the two first cantos of Don Juan were produced:—

September 19. 1818.—“I have finished the First Canto (a long one, of about 180 octaves) of a poem in the style and manner of Beppo, encouraged by the good success of the same. It is called Don Juan, and is meant to be a little quietly facetious upon every thing. But I doubt whether it is not—at least, as far as it has yet gone—too free for these very modest days. However, I shall try the experiment anonymously; and if it don't take, it will be discontinued. It is dedicated to Southey, in good, simple, savage verse, upon the Laureate's politics, and the way he got them.”

January 25. 1819.—“Print it entire, omitting, of course, the lines on Castlereagh, as I am not on the spot to meet him. I have acquiesced in the request and representation; and having done so, it is idle to detail my arguments in favour of my own self-love and ‘poeshie;’ but I protest. If the poem has poetry, it would stand; if not, fall; the rest is ‘leather and prunello,’ and has never yet affected any human production ‘pro or con.’ Dulness is the only annihilator in such cases. As to the cant of the day, I despise it, as I have ever done all its other finical fashions, which become you as paint became the ancient Britons. If you admit thus prudery, you must omit half Ariosto, La Fontaine, Shakspeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Massinger, Ford, all the Charles Second writers; in short, *something* of most who have written before Pope and are worth reading, and much of Pope himself.”

February 1. 1819.—“I have not yet begun to copy out the Second Canto, which is finished, from natural laziness, and the discouragement of the milk and water they have thrown upon the First. I say all this to them as to you, that is, for *you* to say to *them*, for I will have nothing underhand. If they had told me the poetry was bad, I would have acquiesced; but they say the contrary, and then talk to me about *morality*—the first time I ever heard the word from any body who was not a rascal that used it for a purpose. I maintain that it is the most moral of poems; but if people won't discover the moral, that is their fault, not mine.”

April 6. 1819. “You sha'n't make *canticles* of my cantos. The poem will please, if it is lively; if it is stupid, it will fail: but I will have none of your damned cutting and slashing. If you please, you may publish *anonymously*; it will perhaps be better; but I will battle my way against them all, like a porcupine.”

August 12. 1819.—“You are right, Gifford is right, Crabbe is right, Hobhouse is right—you are all right, and I am all wrong; but do, pray, let me have that pleasure. Cut me up root and branch; quarter me in the Quarterly; send round my ‘disjecti membra poetæ,’ like those of the Levite's concubine; make me, if you will, a spectacle to men and angels; but don't ask me to alter, for I won't:—I am obstinate and lazy—and there 's the truth.—You ask me for the plan of Donny Johnny: I *have* no plan; I *had* no plan; but I had or have materials; though if, like Tony Lumpkin, ‘I am to be snubbed so when I am in spirits,’ the poem will be naught, and the poet turn serious again. If it don't take, I will leave it off where it is, with all due respect to the public; but if continued, it must be in my own way. You might as well make Hamlet (or Diggory) ‘act mad’ in a strait waistcoat, as trammel my buffoonery, if I am to be a buffoon; their gestures and my thoughts would only be pitiably absurd and ludicrously constrained. Why, man, the soul of such writing is its licence; at least the *liberty* of that licence, if one likes—not that one should abuse it. It is like Trial by Jury and Peerage, and the Habeas Corpus—a very fine thing, but chiefly in the *reversion*; because no one wishes to be tried for the mere pleasure of proving his possession of the privilege.”

August 24. 1819.—“Keep the anonymous: it helps what fun there may be. But if the matter grow serious about ‘Don Juan,’ and you feel yourself in a scrape, or me either, *own that I am the author*. I will never shrink; and if *you* do, I can always answer you in the question of Guatimozin to his minister—each being on his own coals.

Lord Byron began to compose Canto III in October, 1819; but the outcry raised by the publication of Cantos I and II annoyed him so much, that he for a time laid the work aside, and afterwards proceeded in it only by fits and starts. Mr. Moore, who visited him while Canto III was in progress, says—“So sensitive, indeed,—in addition to his usual abundance of this quality,—did he, at length, grow on the subject, that when Mr. W. Bankes, who succeeded me as his visiter, happened to tell him, one day, that he had heard a Mr. Saunders (or some such name), then resident at Venice, declare that, in his opinion, ‘Don Juan was all Grub-street,’ such an effect had this disparaging speech upon his mind (though coming from a person who, as he himself would have it, was ‘nothing but a d—d salt-fish seller’), that, for some time after, by his own confession to Mr. Bankes, he could not bring himself to write another line of the Poem; and one morning, opening a drawer where the neglected manuscript lay, he said to his friend, ‘Look here—this is all Mr. Saunders's Grub-street.’”—Cantos III, IV, and V were published together in August, 1821,—still without the name either of author or bookseller.—E.

CANTO III.

I.

HAIL, Muse ! *et cætera*.—We left Juan sleeping,
 Pillow'd upon a fair and happy breast,
 And watch'd by eyes that never yet knew weeping,
 And loved by a young heart too deeply bless'd
 To feel the poison through her spirit creeping,
 Or know who rested there ; a foe to rest
 Had soil'd the current of her sinless years,
 And turn'd her pure heart's purest blood to tears.

II.

Oh, Love ! what is it in this world of ours
 Which makes it fatal to be loved ? Ah, why
 With cypress branches hast thou wreathed thy bowers
 And made thy best interpreter a sigh ?
 As those who dote on odours pluck the flowers,
 And place them on their breast—but place to die :
 Thus the frail beings we would fondly cherish
 Are laid within our bosoms but to perish.

III.

In her first passion woman loves her lover,
 In all the others all she loves is love,
 Which grows a habit she can ne'er get over,
 And fits her loosely—like an easy glove,
 As you may find, whene'er you like to prove her :
 One man alone at first her heart can move ;
 She then prefers him in the plural number,
 Not finding that the additions much encumber.

IV.

I now not if the fault be men's or theirs ;
 But one thing 's pretty sure ; a woman planted
 (Unless at once she plunge for life in prayers),
 After a decent time must be gallanted ;
 Although, no doubt, her first of love affairs
 Is that to which her heart is wholly granted ;
 Yet there are some, they say, who have had *none*,
 But those who have ne'er end with only *one*.

V.

'T is melancholy, and a fearful sign
 Of human frailty, folly, also crime,
 That love and marriage rarely can combine,
 Although they both are born in the same clime ;
 Marriage from love, like vinegar from wine—
 A sad, sour, sober beverage—by time
 Is sharpen'd from its high celestial flavour
 Down to a very homely household savour.

VI.

There 's something of antipathy, as 't were,
 Between their present and their future state ;
 A kind of flattery that 's hardly fair
 Is used, until the truth arrives too late—
 Yet what can people do, except despair ?
 The same things change their names at such a rate :
 For instance—passion in a lover 's glorious,
 But in a husband is pronounced uxorious.

VII.

Men grow ashamed of being so very fond,
 They sometimes also get a little tired
 (But that, of course, is rare), and then despond :
 The same things cannot always be admired,
 Yet 't is "so nominated in the bond,"
 That both are tied till one shall have expired.
 Sad thought ! to lose the spouse that was adorning
 Our days, and put one's servants into mourning.

VIII.

There 's doubtless something in domestic doings
 Which forms, in fact, true love's antithesis ;
 Romances paint at full length people's wooings,
 But only give a bust of marriages ;
 For no one cares for matrimonial cooings,
 There 's nothing wrong in a connubial kiss :
 Think you, if Laura had been Petrarch's wife,
 He would have written sonnets all his life ?

IX.

All tragedies are finish'd by a death,
 All comedies are ended by a marriage ;
 The future states of both are left to faith,
 For authors fear description might disparage
 The worlds to come of both, or fall beneath,
 And then both worlds would punish their miscarriage ;
 So leaving each their priest and prayer-book ready,
 They say no more of Death or of the Lady.¹

X.

The only two that in my recollection
 Have sung of heaven and hell, or marriage, are
 Dante and Milton, and of both the affection
 Was hapless in their nuptials, for some bar
 Of fault or temper ruin'd the connexion
 (Such things, in fact, it don't ask much to mar);
 But Dante's Beatrice and Milton's Eve
 Were not drawn from their spouses, you conceive.

XI.

Some persons say that Dante meant theology
 By Beatrice, and not a mistress—I,
 Although my opinion may require apology,
 Deem this a commentator's fantasy,
 Unless indeed it was from his own knowledge he
 Decided thus, and show'd good reason why;
 I think that Dante's more abstruse ecstasies
 Meant to personify the mathematics.

XII

Haidee and Juan were not married, but
 The fault was theirs, not mine : it is not fair,
 Chaste reader, then, in any way to put
 The blame on me, unless you wish they were.
 Then, if you 'd have them wedded, please to shut
 The book which treats of this erroneous pair,
 Before the consequences grow too awful—
 'T is dangerous to read of loves unlawful.

XIII.

Yet they were happy—happy in the illicit
 Indulgence of their innocent desires ;
 But, more imprudent grown with every visit,
 Haidee forgot the island was her sire's.
 When we have what we like, 't is hard to miss it,
 At least in the beginning, ere one tires ;
 Thus she came often, not a moment losing,
 Whilst her piratical papa was cruising.

XIV.

Let not his mode of raising cash seem strange,
 Although he fleeced the flags of every nation,
 For into a prime minister but change
 His title, and 't is nothing but taxation ;
 But he, more modest, took an humbler range
 Of life, and in an honest vocation
 Pursued o'er the high seas his watery journey,
 And merely practised as a sea-attorney.

XV.

The good old gentleman had been detain'd
 By winds and waves, and some important captures;
 And, in the hope of more, at sea remain'd,
 Although a squall or two had damp'd his raptures
 By swamping one of the prizes; he had chain'd
 His prisoners, dividing them like chapters,
 In number'd lots; they all had cuffs and collars,
 And averaged each from ten to a hundred dollars.

XVI.

Some he disposed of off Cape Matapan,
 Among his friends the Mainots; some he sold
 To his Tunis correspondents, save one man
 Toss'd overboard unsaleable (being old);
 The rest—save here and there some richer one
 Reserved for future ransom in the hold,—
 Were link'd alike; as for the common people, he
 Had a large order from the Dey of Tripoli.

XVII.

The merchandize was served in the same way,
 Pieced out for different marts in the Levant,
 Except some certain portions of the prey,
 Light classic articles of female want,
 French stuffs, lace, tweezers, toothpicks, teapot, tray.
 Guitars and castanets from Alicant;
 All which selected from the spoil he gathers,
 Robb'd for his daughter by the best of fathers.

XVIII.

A monkey, a Dutch mastiff, a mackaw,
 Two parrots, with a Persian cat and kittens,
 He chose from several animals he saw—
 A terrier, too, which once had been a Briton's,
 Who dying on the coast of Ithaca,
 The peasants gave the poor dumb thing a pittance:
 These to secure in this strong blowing weather,
 He caged in one huge hamper altogether.

XIX.

Then having settled his marine affairs,
 Despatching single cruisers here and there,
 His vessel having need of some repairs,
 He shaped his course to where his daughter fair
 Continued still her hospitable cares;
 But that part of the coast being shoal and bare,
 And rough with reefs, which ran out many a mile,
 His port lay on the other side o' the isle.

XX.

And there he went ashore without delay,
 Having no custom-house or quarantine
 To ask him awkward questions on the way
 About the time and place where he had been :
 He left his ship to be hove down next day,
 With orders to the people to careen ;
 So that all hands were busy beyond measure,
 In getting out goods, ballast, guns, and treasure.

XXI.

Arriving at the summit of a hill
 Which overlook'd the white walls of his home,
 He stopp'd.—What singular emotions fill
 Their bosoms who have been induced to roam !
 With fluttering doubts if all be well or ill—
 With love for many, and with fears for some ;
 All feelings which o'erleap the years long lost,
 And bring our hearts back to their starting-post.

XXII.

The approach of home to husbands and to sires,
 After long travelling by land or water,
 Most naturally some small doubt inspires—
 A female family 's a serious matter
 (None trusts the sex more, or so much admires—
 But they hate flattery, so I never flatter) ;
 Wives in their husbands' absences grow subtler,
 And daughters sometimes run off with the butler.

XXIII.

An honest gentleman at his return
 May not have the good fortune of Ulysses ;
 Not all lone matrons for their husbands mourn,
 Or show the same dislike to suitors' kisses ;
 The odds are that he finds a handsome urn
 To his memory, and two or three young misses
 Born to some friend, who holds his wife and riches,
 And that his Argus bites him by—the breeches.

XXIV.

If single, probably his plighted fair
 Has in his absence wedded some rich miser ;
 But all the better, for the happy pair
 May quarrel, and the lady growing wiser,
 He may resume his amatory care
 As cavalier servente, or despise her ;
 And, that his sorrow may not be a dumb one,
 Write odes on the inconstancy of woman.

XXV.

And oh! ye gentlemen who have already
 Some chaste *liaison* of the kind—I mean
 An honest friendship with a married lady—
 The only thing of this sort ever seen
 To last—of all connexions the most steady,
 And the true Hymen (the first 's but a screen)—
 Yet for all that keep not too long away,
 I 've known the absent wrong'd four times a-day.

XXVI.

Lambro, our sea-solicitor, who had
 Much less experience of dry land than ocean,
 On seeing his own chimney smoke, felt glad;
 But not knowing metaphysics, had no notion
 Of the true reason of his not being sad,
 Or that of any other strong emotion;
 He loved his child, and would have wept the loss of her,
 But knew the cause no more than a philosopher.

XXVII.

He saw his white walls shining in the sun,
 His garden trees all shadowy and green;
 He heard his rivulet's light bubbling run,
 The distant dog-bark; and perceived, between
 The umbrage of the wood so cool and dun,
 The moving figures and the sparkling sheen
 Of arms (in the East all arm), and various dyes
 Of colour'd garbs, as bright as butterflies.

XXVIII.

And as the spot where they appear he nears,
 Surprised at these unwonted signs of idling,
 He hears—Alas! no music of the spheres,
 But an unhallow'd, earthly sound of fiddling!
 A melody which made him doubt his ears,
 The cause being past his guessing or unriddling;
 A pipe, too, and a drum, and, shortly after,
 A most unoriental roar of laughter.

XXIX.

And still more nearly to the place advancing,
 Descending rather quickly the declivity,
 Through the waved branches, o'er the greensward glancing,
 'Midst other indications of festivity,
 Seeing a troop of his domestics dancing
 Like dervises, who turn as on a pivot, he
 Perceived it was the Pyrrhic dance so martial,
 To which the Levantines are very partial.

XXX.

And further on a group of Grecian girls,
 The first and tallest her white kerchief waving,
 Were strung together like a row of pearls;
 Link'd hand in hand, and dancing; each too having
 Down her white neck long floating auburn curls—
 (The least of which would set ten poets raving);
 Their leader sang—and bounded to her song,
 With choral step and voice, the virgin throng.

XXXI.

And here assembled cross-legg'd round their trays,
 Small social parties just begun to dine;
 Pilaus and meats of all sorts met the gaze,
 And flasks of Samian and of Chian vine,
 And sherbet cooling in the porous vase;
 Above them their dessert grew on its vine,
 The orange and pomegranate, nodding o'er,
 Dropp'd in their laps, scarce pluck'd, their mellow store.

XXXII.

A band of children, round a snow-white ram,
 There wreath'd his venerable horns with flowers;
 While, peaceful as if still an unwean'd lamb,
 The patriarch of the flock all gently cowers
 His sober head, majestically tame,
 Or eats from out the palm, or playful lowers
 His brow as if in act to butt, and then,
 Yielding to their small hands, draws back again.

XXXIII.

Their classical profiles, and glittering dresses,
 Their large black eyes, and soft seraphic cheeks,
 Crimson as cleft pomegranates, their long tresses,
 The gesture which enchants, the eye that speaks,
 The innocence which happy childhood blesses,
 Made quite a picture of these little Greeks;
 So that the philosophical beholder
 Sigh'd for their sakes—that they should e'er grow older.

XXXIV.

Afar a dwarf buffoon stood telling tales
 To a sedate gray circle of old smokers,
 Of secret treasures found in hidden vales,
 Of wonderful replies from Arab jokers,
 Of charms to make good gold and cure bad ails,
 Of rocks bewitch'd that open to the knockers,
 Of magic ladies who, by one sole act,
 Transform'd their lords to beasts (but that 's a fact).

XXXV.

Here was no lack of innocent diversion
 For the imagination or the senses,
 Song, dance, wine, music, stories from the Persian,
 All pretty pastimes in which no offence is.
 But Lambro saw all these things with aversion,
 Perceiving in his absence such expenses,
 Dreading that climax of all human ills,
 The inflammation of his weekly bills.

XXXVI.

Ah! what is man? what perils still environ
 The happiest mortals even after dinner—
 A day of gold from out an age of iron
 Is all that life allows the luckiest sinner :
 Pleasure (whene'er she sings, at least) 's a siren,
 That lures, to flay alive, the young beginner.
 Lambro's reception at his people's banquet
 Was such as fire accords to a wet blanket.

XXXVII.

He—being a man who seldom used a word
 Too much, and wishing gladly to surprise
 (In general he surprised men with the sword)
 His daughter—had not sent before to advise
 Of his arrival, so that no one stirr'd ;
 And long he paused to re-assure his eyes,
 In fact much more astonish'd than delighted
 To find so much good company invited.

XXXVIII.

He did not know—(Alas! how men will lie)—
 That a report—(especially the Greeks)—
 Avouch'd his death (such people never die),
 And put his house in mourning several weeks.
 But now their eyes and also lips were dry ;
 The bloom too had return'd to Haidee's cheeks ;
 Her tears too being return'd into their fount,
 She now kept house upon her own account.

XXXIX.

Hence all this rice, meat, dancing, wine, and fiddling,
 Which turn'd the isle into a place of pleasure ;
 The servants all were getting drunk or idling,
 A life which made them happy beyond measure.
 Her father's hospitality seem'd middling,
 Compared with what Haidee did with his treasure ;
 'T was wonderful how things went on improving,
 While she had not one hour to spare from loving.

XL.

Perhaps you think, in stumbling on this feast,
 He flew into a passion, and in fact
 There was no mighty reason to be pleased ;
 Perhaps you prophesy some sudden act,
 The whip, the rack, or dungeon at the least,
 To teach his people to be more exact,
 And that, proceeding at a very high rate,
 He show'd the royal *penchants* of a pirate.

XLI.

You 're wrong.—He was the mildest manner'd man
 That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat ;
 With such true breeding of a gentleman,
 You never could divine his real thought ;
 No courtier could, and scarcely woman can
 Gird more deceit within a petticoat :
 Pity he loved adventurous life's variety,
 He was so great a loss to good society.

XLII.

Advancing to the nearest dinner-tray,
 Tapping the shoulder of the nighest guest,
 With a peculiar smile, which, by the way,
 Boded no good, whatever it express'd,
 He ask'd the meaning of this holiday :
 The vinous Greek to whom he had address'd
 His question, much too merry to divine
 The questioner, fill'd up a glass of wine,

XLIII.

And, without turning his facetious head,
 Over his shoulder, with a Bacchant air,
 Presented the o'erflowing cup, and said,
 " Talking 's dry work, I have no time to spare."
 A second hiccup'd, " Our old master 's dead,
 You 'd better ask our mistress who 's his heir."
 " Our mistress !" quoth a third : " Our mistress !—pooh !
 You mean our master—not the old, but new."

XLIV.

These rascals, being new comers, knew not whom
 They thus address'd—and Lambro's visage fell—
 And o'er his eye a momentary gloom
 Pass'd, but he strove quite courteously to quell
 The expression, and, endeavouring to resume
 His smile, requested one of them to tell
 The name and quality of his new patron,
 Who seem'd to have turn'd Haidee into a matron.

XLV.

“ I know not,” quoth the fellow, “ who or what
 He is, nor whence he came—and little care;
 But this I know, that this roast capon ’s fat,
 And that good wine ne’er wash’d down better fare;
 And if you are not satisfied with that,
 Direct your questions to my neighbour there;
 He ’ll answer all for better or for worse,
 For none likes more to hear himself converse.”

XLVI.

I said that Lambro was a man of patience,
 And certainly he show’d the best of breeding,
 Which scarce even France, the paragon of nations,
 E’er saw her most polite of sons exceeding:
 He bore these sneers against his near relations,
 His own anxiety, his heart too bleeding,
 The insults too of every servile glutton,
 Who all the time were eating up his mutton.

XLVII.

Now in a person used to much command—
 To bid men come, and go, and come again—
 To see his orders done too out of hand,
 Whether the word was death, or but the chain—
 It may seem strange to find his manners bland;
 Yet such things are, which I cannot explain,
 Though doubtless he who can command himself
 Is good to govern—almost as a Guelf.

XLVIII.

Not that he was not sometimes rash or so,
 But never in his real and serious mood;
 Then calm, concentrated, and still, and slow,
 He lay coil’d like the boa in the wood.
 With him it never was a word and blow;
 His angry word once o’er, he shed no blood;
 But in his silence there was much to rue,
 And his *one* blow left little work for *two*.

XLIX.

He ask’d no further questions, and proceeded
 On to the house, but by a private way,
 So that the few who met him hardly heeded,
 So little they expected him that day;
 If love paternal in his bosom pleaded
 For Haidee’s sake, is more than I can say,
 But certainly to one deem’d dead returning,
 This revel seem’d a curious mode of mourning.

L.

If all the dead could now return to life,
 (Which God forbid!) or some, or a great many;
 For instance, if a husband or his wife
 (Nuptial examples are as good as any),
 No doubt whate'er might be their former strife,
 The present weather would be much more rainy—
 Tears shed into the grave of the connexion
 Would share most probably its resurrection.

LI.

He enter'd in the house no more his home,
 A thing to human feelings the most trying,
 And harder for the heart to overcome,
 Perhaps, than even the mental pangs of dying:
 To find our hearthstone turn'd into a tomb,
 And round its once warm precincts palely lying
 The ashes of our hopes, is a deep grief,
 Beyond a single gentleman's belief.

LII.

He enter'd in the house—his home no more,
 For without hearts there is no home—and felt
 The solitude of passing his own door
 Without a welcome: *there* he long had dwelt,
 There his few peaceful days Time had swept o'er,
 There his worn bosom and keen eye would melt
 Over the innocence of that sweet child,
 His only shrine of feelings undefiled.

LIII.

He was a man of a strange temperament,
 Of mild demeanour though of savage mood;
 Moderate in all his habits, and content
 With temperance in pleasure as in food;
 Quick to perceive, and strong to bear, and meant
 For something better, if not wholly good:
 His country's wrongs, and his despair to save her,
 Had stung him from a slave to an enslaver.

LIV.

The love of power, and rapid gain of gold,
 The hardness by long habitude produced,
 The dangerous life in which he had grown old,
 The mercy he had granted oft abused,
 The sights he was accustom'd to behold,
 The wild seas, and wild men with whom he cruised,
 Had cost his enemies a long repentance,
 And made him a good friend, but bad acquaintance.

LV.

But something of the spirit of old Greece
 Flash'd o'er his soul a few heroic rays,
 Such as lit onward to the golden fleece
 His predecessors in the Colchian days :
 'T is true he had no ardent love for peace ;
 Alas ! his country show'd no path to praise :
 Hate to the world and war with every nation
 He waged, in vengeance of her degradation.

LVI.

Still o'er his mind the influence of the clime
 Shed its Ionian elegance, which show'd
 Its power unconsciously full many a time—
 A taste seen in the choice of his abode,
 A love of music and of scenes sublime,
 A pleasure in the gentle stream that flow'd
 Past him in crystal, and a joy in flowers,
 Bedew'd his spirit in his calmer hours.

LVII.

But whatsoe'er he had of love reposed
 On that beloved daughter ; she had been
 The only thing which kept his heart unclosed
 Amidst the savage deeds he 'd done and seen,
 A lonely pure affection unopposed :
 There wanted but the loss of this to wean
 His feelings from all milk of human kindness,
 And turn him, like the Cyclops, mad with blindness.

LVIII.

The cubless tigress in her jungle raging
 Is dreadful to the shepherd and the flock ;
 The ocean when its yeasty war is waging
 Is awful to the vessel near the rock ;
 But violent things will sooner bear assuaging,
 Their fury being spent by its own shock,
 Than the stern, single, deep, and wordless ire
 Of a strong human heart, and in a sire.

LIX.

It is a hard, although a common case,
 To find our children running restive—they
 In whom our brightest days we would retrace,
 Our little selves reform'd in finer clay ;
 Just as old age is creeping on apace,
 And clouds come o'er the sunset of our day,
 They kindly leave us, though not quite alone,
 But in good company—the gout or stone.

LX.

Yet a fine family is a fine thing
 (Provided they don't come in after dinner);
 'T is beautiful to see a matron bring
 Her children up (if nursing them don't thin her);
 Like cherubs round an altar-piece they cling
 To the fire-side (a sight to touch a sinner).
 A lady with her daughters or her nieces
 Shine like a guinea and seven-shilling pieces.

LXI.

Old Lambro pass'd unseen a private gate,
 And stood within his hall at eventide;
 Meantime the lady and her lover sate
 At wassail in their beauty and their pride:
 An ivory inlaid table spread with state
 Before them, and fair slaves on every side;
 Gems, gold, and silver, form'd the service mostly,
 Mother of pearl and coral the less costly.

LXII.

The dinner made about a hundred dishes;
 Lamb and pistachio nuts—in short, all meats,
 And saffron soups, and sweetbreads; and the fishes
 Were of the finest that e'er flounced in nets,
 Dress'd to a Sybarite's most pamper'd wishes;
 The beverage was various sherbets
 Of raisin, orange, and pomegranate juice,
 Squeezed through the rind, which makes it best for use.

LXIII.

These were ranged round, each in its crystal ewer,
 And fruits and date-bread loaves closed the repast,
 And Mocha's berry, from Arabia pure,
 In small fine Chinacups, came in at last—
 Gold cups of filigree, made to secure
 The hand from burning, underneath them placed;
 Cloves, cinnamon, and saffron too, were boil'd
 Up with the coffee, which (I think) they spoil'd.

LXIV.

The hangings of the room were tapestry, made
 Of velvet pannels, each of different hue,
 And thick with damask flowers of silk inlaid;
 And round them ran a yellow border too;
 The upper border, richly wrought, display'd,
 Embroider'd delicately o'er with blue,
 Soft Persian sentences, in lilac letters,
 From poets, or the moralists, their betters.

LXV.

These oriental writings on the wall,
 Quite common in those countries, are a kind
 Of monitors adapted to recall,
 Like skulls at Memphian banquets, to the mind
 The words which shook Belshazzar in his hall,
 And took his kingdom from him.—You will find,
 Though sages may pour out their wisdom's treasure,
 There is no sterner moralist than pleasure.

LXVI.

A beauty at the season's close grown hectic,
 A genius who has drunk himself to death,
 A rake turn'd methodistic or eclectic—
 (For that 's the name they like to pray beneath)—
 But most, an alderman struck apoplectic,
 Are things that really take away the breath,
 And show that late hours, wine, and love, are able
 To do not much less damage than the table.

LXVII.

Haidee and Juan carpeted their feet
 On crimson satin, border'd with pale blue;
 Their sofa occupied three parts complete
 Of the apartment—and appear'd quite new;
 The velvet cushions—(for a throne more meet)—
 Were scarlet, from whose glowing centre grew
 A sun emboss'd in gold, whose rays of tissue,
 Meridian-like, were seen all light to issue.

LXVIII.

Crystal and marble, plate and porcelain,
 Had done their work of splendour; Indian mats
 And Persian carpets, which the heart bled to stain,
 Over the floors were spread; gazelles and cats,
 And dwarfs and blacks, and such like things, that gain
 Their bread as ministers and favourites—(that 's
 To say, by degradation)—mingled there,
 As plentiful as in a court or fair.

LXIX.

There was no want of lofty mirrors, and
 The tables, most of ebony, inlaid
 With mother of pearl or ivory, stood at hand,
 Or were of tortoise-shell or rare woods made,
 Fretted with gold or silver: by command,
 The greater part of these were ready spread
 With viands and sherbets in ice, and wine—
 Kept for all comers, at all hours to dine.

LXX.

Of all the dresses I select Haidee's :
 She wore two jelicks—one was of pale yellow ;
 Of azure, pink, and white, was her chemise—
 'Neath which her breast heaved like a little billow ;
 With buttons form'd of pearls as large as pease,
 All gold and crimson shone her jelick's fellow,
 And the striped white gauze baracan that bound her,
 Like fleecy clouds about the moon, flow'd round her.

LXXI.

One large gold bracelet clasp'd each lovely arm,
 Lockless—so pliable from the pure gold
 That the hand stretch'd and shut it without harm,
 The limb which it adorn'd its only mould ;
 So beautiful—its very shape would charm,
 And clinging as if loth to lose its hold,
 The purest ore inclosed the whitest skin
 That e'er by precious metal was held in.⁵

LXXII.

Around, as princess of her father's land,
 A like gold bar above her instep roll'd,¹
 Announced her rank; twelve rings were on her hand;
 Her hair was starr'd with gems; her veil's fine fold
 Below her breast was fasten'd with a band
 Of lavish pearls, whose worth could scarce be told;
 Her orange silk full Turkish trowsers furl'd
 About the prettiest ankle in the world.

LXXIII.

Her hair's long auburn waves down to her heel
 Flow'd like an Alpine torrent which the sun
 Dyes with his morning light, and would conceal
 Her person⁵ if allow'd at large to run;
 And still they seem resentfully to feel
 The silken fillet's curb, and sought to shun
 Their bonds whene'er some zephyr caught began
 To offer his young pinion as her fan.

LXXIV.

Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
 The very air seem'd lighter from her eyes,
 They were so soft and beautiful, and rife
 With all we can imagine of the skies,
 And pure as Psyche, ere she grew a wife—
 Too pure even for the purest human ties;
 Her overpowering presence made you feel
 It would not be idolatry to kneel.

LXXV.

Her eyelashes, though dark as night, were tinged
 (It is the country's custom), but in vain;
 For those large black eyes were so blackly fringed,
 The glossy rebels mock'd the jetty stain,
 And in their native beauty stood avenged:
 Her nails were touch'd with henna; but again
 The power of art was turn'd to nothing, for
 They could not look more rosy than before.

LXXVI.

The henna should be deeply dyed to make
 The skin relieved appear more fairly fair;
 She had no need of this, day ne'er will break
 On mountain tops more heavenly white than her:
 The eye might doubt if it were well awake,
 She was so like a vision; I might err,
 But Shakspeare also says 't is very silly
 "To gild refined gold, or paint the lily."

LXXVII.

Juan had on a shawl of black and gold,
 But a white baracan, and so transparent,
 The sparkling gems beneath you might behold,
 Like small stars through the milky way apparent;
 His turban, furl'd in many a graceful fold,
 An emerald aigrette with Haidee's hair in 't
 Surmounted, as its clasp,—a glowing crescent,
 Whose rays shone ever trembling, but incessant.

LXXVIII.

And now they were diverted by their suite,
 Dwarfs, dancing girls, black eunuchs, and a poet,
 Which made their new establishment complete;
 The last was of great fame, and liked to show it:
 His verses rarely wanted their due feet,
 And for his theme—he seldom sung below it,
 He being paid to satirize or flatter,
 As the psalm says, "inditing a good matter."

LXXIX.

He praised the present, and abused the past,
 Reversing the good custom of old days;
 An eastern anti-jacobin at last
 He turn'd, preferring pudding to *no* praise.
 For some few years his lot had been o'ercast
 By his seeming independent in his lays;
 But now he sung the Sultan and the Pacha,
 With truth like Southey, and with verse like Crashaw.⁶

LXXX.

He was a man who had seen many changes,
 And always changed as true as any needle,
 His polar star being one which rather ranges,
 And not the fix'd—he knew the way to wheedle;
 So vile he 'scaped the doom which oft avenges;
 And being fluent (save indeed when fee'd ill),
 He lied with such a fervour of intention—
 There was no doubt he earn'd his laureate pension.

LXXXI.

But he had genius,—when a turncoat has it,
 The “vates irritabilis” takes care
 That without notice few full moons shall pass it;
 Even good men like to make the public stare:—
 But to my subject—let me see—what was it?
 Oh!—the third canto—and the pretty pair—
 Their loves, and feasts, and house, and dress, and mode
 Of living in their insular abode.

LXXXII.

Their poet, a sad trimmer, but no less
 In company a very pleasant fellow,
 Had been the favourite of full many a mess
 Of men, and made them speeches when half mellow;
 And though his meaning they could rarely guess,
 Yet still they deign'd to hiccup or to bellow
 The glorious meed of popular applause,
 Of which the first ne'er knows the second cause.

LXXXIII.

But now being lifted into high society,
 And having pick'd up several odds and ends
 Of free thoughts in his travels, for variety,
 He deem'd, being in a lone isle among friends,
 That, without any danger of a riot, he
 Might for long lying make himself amends;
 And, singing as he sung in his warm youth,
 Agree to a short armistice with truth.

LXXXIV.

He 'd travell'd 'mongst the Arabs, Turks, and Franks,
 And knew the self-loves of the different nations;
 And having lived with people of all ranks,
 Had something ready upon most occasions—
 Which got him a few presents and some thanks.
 He varied with some skill his adulations;
 To “do at Rome as Romans do,” a piece
 Of conduct was which he observed in Greece.

LXXXV.

Thus, usually, when he was ask'd to sing,
 He gave the different nations something national;
 'T was all the same to him—"God save the King,"
 Or "*Ça ira*," according to the fashion all.
 His muse made increment of any thing,
 From the high lyric down to the low rational:
 If Pindar sang horse-races, what should hinder
 Himself from being as pliable as Pindar?

LXXXVI.

In France, for instance, he would write a chanson;
 In England, a six-canto quarto tale;
 In Spain, he 'd make a ballad or romance on
 The last war—much the same in Portugal;
 In Germany, the Pegasus he 'd prance on
 Would be old Goethe's—(see what says de Staël);
 In Italy, he 'd ape the "*Trecentisti*;"⁷
 In Greece, he 'd sing some sort of hymn like this t' ye:

The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece!
 Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
 Where grew the arts of war and peace,
 Where Delos rose and Phœbus sprung!
 Eternal summer gilds them yet,
 But-all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,⁸
 The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
 Have found the fame your shores refuse;
 Their place of birth alone is mute
 To sounds which echo further west
 Than your sires' "*Islands of the Blest*."⁹

The mountains look on Marathon,
 And Marathon looks on the sea;
 And musing there an hour alone,
 I dream'd that Greece might still be free;
 For, standing on the Persians' grave,
 I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sat on the rocky brow
 Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
 And ships, by thousands, lay below,
 And men in nations;—all were his!
 He counted them at break of day—
 And when the sun set where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
 My country? On thy voiceless shore
 The heroic lay is tuneless now—

The heroic bosom beats no more!
 And must thy lyre, so long divine,
 Degenerate into hands like mine?

'T is something, in the dearth of fame,
 Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
 To feel at least a patriot's shame,
 Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
 For what is left the poet here?
 For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more bless'd?
 Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.
 Earth! render back from out thy breast
 A remnant of our Spartan dead!
 Of the three hundred grant but three,
 To make a new Thermopylæ!

What! silent still? and silent all?
 Ah! no;—the voices of the dead
 Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
 And answer, "Let one living head,
 But one arise,—we come, we come!"
 'T is but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain: strike other chords;
 Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
 Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
 And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
 Hark! rising to the ignoble call—
 How answers each bold bacchanal!

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet,
 Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
 Of two such lessons, why forget
 The nobler and the manlier one?
 You have the letters Cadmus gave—
 Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 We will not think of themes like these!
 It made Anacreon's song divine:
 He served—but served Polycrates—
 A tyrant; but our masters then
 Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
 Was freedom's best and bravest friend ;
That tyrant was Miltiades !
 Oh ! that the present hour would lend
 Another despot of the kind !
 Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
 On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
 Exists the remnant of a line
 Such as the Doric mothers bore ;
 And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
 The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks——
 They have a king who buys and sells :
 In native swords, and native ranks,
 The only hope of courage dwells ;
 But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
 Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
 Our virgins dance beneath the shade——
 I see their glorious black eyes shine :
 But, gazing on each glowing maid,
 My own the burning tear-drop laves,
 To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep——
 Where nothing, save the waves and I,
 May hear our mutual murmurs sweep ;
 There, swan-like, let me sing and die :¹⁰
 A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine——
 Dash down yon cup of Samian wine !

LXXXVII.

Thus sung, or would, or could, or should have sung,
 The modern Greek, in tolerable verse ;
 If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece was young,
 Yet in these times he might have done much worse :
 His strain display'd some feeling—right or wrong ;
 And feeling in a poet is the source
 Of others' feeling ; but they are such liars,
 And take all colours—like the hands of dyers.

LXXXVIII.

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
 Falling like dew upon a thought, produces
 That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think.

'T is strange, the shortest letter which man uses,
 Instead of speech, may form a lasting link
 Of ages : to what straits old Time reduces
 Frail man, when paper—even a rag like this,
 Survives himself, his tomb, and all that 's his.

LXXXIX.

And when his bones are dust, his grave a blank,
 His station, generation, even his nation,
 Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank
 In chronological commemoration,
 Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,
 Or graven stone found in a barrack's station,
 In digging the foundation of a closet,
 May turn his name up as a rare deposit.

XC.

And glory long has made the sages smile ;
 'T is something, nothing, words, illusion, wind—
 Depending more upon the historian's style
 Than on the name a person leaves behind.
 Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to Hoyle ;
 The present century was growing blind
 To the great Marlborough's skill in giving knocks,
 Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

XCI.

Milton 's the prince of poets—so we say ;
 A little heavy, but no less divine ;
 An independent being in his day—
 Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and wine ;
 But his life falling into Johnson's way,
 We 're told this great high priest of all the Nine
 Was whipt at college,—a harsh sire—odd spouse,
 For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

XCII.

All these are, *certes*, entertaining facts,
 Like Shakspeare's stealing deer, Lord Bacon's bribes ;
 Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest acts ;
 Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well describes) ;
 Like Cromwell's pranks ;—but although truth exacts
 These amiable descriptions from the scribes,
 As most essential to their hero's story,
 They do not much contribute to his glory.

XCIII.

All are not moralists like Southey, when
 He prated to the world of "Pantisocracy ;"
 Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who then
 Season'd his pedlar poems with democracy ;
 Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen
 Let to the Morning Post its aristocracy ;
 When he and Southey, following the same path,
 Espoused two partners (milliners of Bath).

XCIV.

Such names at present cut a convict figure,
 The very Botany Bay in moral geography ;
 Their loyal treason, renegado rigour,
 Are good manure for their more bare biography.
 Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is bigger
 Than any since the birthday of typography ;
 A drowsy frowzy poem, call'd the "Excursion,"
 Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

XCV.

He there builds up a formidable dike
 Between his own and others' intellect ;
 But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers, like
 Joanna Southcote's Shiloh and her sect,
 Are things which in this century don't strike
 The public mind, so few are the elect ;
 And the new births of both their stale virginities
 Have proved but dropsies, taken for divinities.

XCVI.

But let me to my story : I must own,
 If I have any fault, it is digression ;
 Leaving my people to proceed alone,
 While I soliloquize beyond expression ;
 But these are my addresses from the throne,
 Which put off business to the ensuing session :
 Forgetting each omission is a loss to
 The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.

XCVII.

I know that what our neighbours call "*longueurs*"
 (We've not so good a *word*, but have the *thing*
 In that complete perfection which ensures
 An epic from Bob Southey every spring)—
 Form not the true temptation which allures
 The reader ; but 't would not be hard to bring
 Some fine examples of the *épopée*,
 To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui*.¹²

XCVIII.

We learn from Horace, Homer sometimes sleeps ;
 We feel without him, Wordsworth sometimes wakes,
 To show with what complacency he creeps,
 With his dear *Waggoners*, around his lakes ;
 He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps—
 Of ocean?—no, of air ; and then he makes
 Another outcry for "a little boat,"
 And drivels seas to set it well afloat.¹⁵

XCIX.

If he must fain sweep o'er the etherial plain,
 And Pegasus runs restive in his "waggon,"
 Could he not beg the loan of Charles's Wain?
 Or pray Medea for a single dragon?
 Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,
 He fear'd his neck to venture such a nag on,
 And he must needs mount nearer to the moon,
 Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

C.

"Pedlars," and "boats," and "waggon!" Oh! ye shades
 Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?
 That trash of such sort not alone evades
 Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss
 Floats scum-like uppermost, and these Jack Cades
 Of sense and song above your graves may hiss—
 The "little boatman" and his "Peter Bell"
 Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel!"¹⁴

CI.

T' our tale.—The feast was over, the slaves gone,
 The dwarfs and dancing girls had all retired ;
 The Arab lore and poet's song were done,
 And every sound of revelry expired ;
 The lady and her lover, left alone,
 The rosy flood of twilight sky admired ;—
 Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
 That heavenliest hour of heaven is worthiest thee!

CII.

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!
 The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
 Have felt that moment in its fullest power
 Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,
 While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
 Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,
 And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
 And yet the forest leaves seem stirr'd with prayer.

CIII.

Ave Maria ! 't is the hour of prayer !

Ave Maria ! 't is the hour of love !

Ave Maria ! may our spirits dare

Look up to thine and to thy Son's above !

Ave Maria ! oh that face so fair !

Those downcast eyes beneath the almighty dove—

What though 't is but a pictured image ? strike—

That painting is no idol, 't is too like.

CIV.

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,

In nameless print, that I have no devotion ;

But set those persons down with me to pray,

And you shall see who has the properest notion

Of getting into heaven the shortest way ;

My altars are the mountains and the ocean,

Earth, air, stars,—all that springs from the great Whole

Who hath produced, and will receive the soul.

CV.

Sweet hour of twilight ! in the solitude

Of the pine forest and the silent shore

Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,

Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,

To where the last Cæsarian fortress stood,

Ever-green forest ! which Boccaccio's lore

And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,

How have I loved the twilight hour and thee !

CVI.

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,

Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,

Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine,

And vesper-bell's that rose the boughs along :

The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,

His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng

Which learn'd from this example not to fly

From a true lover, shadow'd my mind's eye.

CVII.

Oh Hesperus !¹⁵ thou bringest all good things—

Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,

To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,

The welcome stall to the o'erlabour'd steer ;

Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone clings,

Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,

Are gather'd round us by thy look of rest ;

Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast.

CVIII.

Soft hour!¹⁶ which wakes the wish and melts the heart
 Of those who sail the seas, on the first day
 When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;
 Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way,
 As the far bell of vesper makes him start,
 Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;
 Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?
 Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns!

CIX.

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom
 Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,
 Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
 Of nations freed, and the world overjoy'd,
 Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb:¹⁷
 Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void
 Of feeling for some kindness done, when power
 Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

CX.

But I 'm digressing; what on earth has Nero,
 Or any such like sovereign buffoons,
 To do with the transactions of my hero,
 More than such madmen's fellow-man—the moon's?
 Sure invention must be down at zero,
 And I grown one of many “wooden spoons”
 Of verse (the name with which we Cantabs please
 To dub the last of honours in degrees).

CXI.

I feel this tediousness will never do—
 'T is being *too* epic, and I must cut down
 (In copying) this long canto into two:
 They 'll never find it out, unless I own
 The fact, excepting some experienced few;
 And then as an improvement 't will be shown:
 I 'll prove that such the opinion of the critic is
 From Aristotle *passim*.—See ΠΟΙΝΤΙΧΗΣ.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

Note 1. Stanza ix.

The old ballad of "Death and the Lady" is alluded to in Shakspeare.—E.

Note 2. Stanza xiv.

Rispose allor Margutte : a dirtel tosto,
 Io non credo più al nero, ch' a l' azzurro ;
 Ma nel cappone, o lessò, o vuogli arrosto ;
 E credo alcuna volta anco nel burro,
 Ne la cervogia, e quand' io n' ho nel mosto ;
 E molto più ne l' aspro che il mangurro ;
 Ma sopra tutto nel buon vino ho fede ;
 E credo che sia salvo chi gli crede.

PULCI, *Morgante Maggiore*, Canto 18, Stanza 115.

Note 3. Stanza lxxi.

This dress is Moorish, and the bracelets and bar are worn in the manner described. The reader will perceive hereafter, that, as the mother of Haidee was of Fez, her daughter wore the garb of the country.

Note 4. Stanza lxxii.

The bar of gold above the instep is a mark of sovereign rank in the women of the families of the Deys, and is worn as such by their female relatives.

Note 5. Stanza lxxiii.

This is no exaggeration ; there were four women whom I remember to have seen, who possessed their hair in this profusion ; of these, three were English, the other was a Levantine. Their hair was of that length and quantity that, when let down, it almost entirely shaded the person, so as nearly to render dress a superfluity. Of these, only one had dark hair ; the Oriental's had, perhaps, the lightest colour of the four.

Note 6. Stanza lxxix.

"Crashaw, the friend of Cowley, was honoured with the praise of Pope ; who both read his poems, and borrowed from them. Being ejected from his fellowship at Peterhouse for denying the covenant, he turned Roman Catholic, and died canon of the church at Loretto."—WARTON.

Note 7. Stanza lxxxvi.

"Trecentisti"—The poets of the fourteenth century—Dante, &c

Note 8. "Song." Stanza 2.

"The Scian and the Teian Muse"—Homer and Anacreon.

Note 9. "Song." Stanza 2.

The νησοι μαχαρων of the Greek poets were supposed to have been the Cape de Verd Islands or the Canaries.

Note 10. "Song." Stanza 16.

..... "Γενοίμαν
 'Ιν' ἔλασεν ἐπασσι ποντοῦ
 Προβλήμ' ἀλικλυστον, ἄκραν
 Ὑπο πλακα Σουνίου," κ. τ. λ.—SOPH. *Ajax*.

Note 11. Stanza xcv.

The followers of this fanatic are said to have amounted, at one time, to a hundred thousand. She announced herself as the mother of a second Shiloh, whose speedy advent she confidently predicted. A cradle of expensive materials was prepared for the expected prodigy. Dr. Reece and another medical man attested her dropsy; and many were her dupes down to the moment of her death, in 1814.—E.

Note 12. Stanza xcvii.

Here follows in the original MS.—

"Time has approved Ennui to be the best
 Of friends, and opiate draughts; your love and wine
 Which shake so much the human brain and breast,
 Must end in languor;—men must sleep like swine;
 The happy lover and the welcome guest
 Both sink at last into a swoon divine;
 Full of deep raptures and of bumpers, they
 Are somewhat sick and sorry the next day."

Note 13. Stanza xcvi.

"There 's something in a flying horse,
 There 's something in a huge balloon;
 But through the clouds I 'll never float
 Until I have a little boat," &c.—WORDSWORTH'S *Peter Bell*.

Note 14. Stanza c.

"The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten."—Mr. W. WORDSWORTH'S *Preface*.

Note 15. Stanza cvii.

Ἐσπερε, πάντα φέρεις,
 Φέρεις οἶνον, φέρεις αἶγα,
 Φέρεις μητέρα παῖδα.

Fragment of Sappho.

Note 16. Stanza cviii.

Era già l' ora che volge 'l disio,
 A' naviganti, e 'ntenerisce il cuore;
 Lo di ch' han detto a' dolci amici addio,
 E che lo nuovo peregrin d' amorè
 Punge, se ode Squilla di lontano,
 Che paja 'l giorno pianger che si muore.

DANTE'S *Purgatory*, Canto viii.

This last line is the first of Gray's *Elegy*, taken by him without acknowledgment.

Note 17. Stanza cix.

See Suetonius for this fact

CANTO IV.

I.

Nothing so difficult as a beginning
In poesy, unless perhaps the end ;
For oftentimes, when Pegasus seems winning
The race, he sprains a wing, and down we tend,
Like Lucifer when hurl'd from heaven for sinning ;
Our sin the same, and hard as his to mend,
Being pride, which leads the mind to soar too far,
Till our own weakness shows us what we are.

II.

But time, which brings all beings to their level,
And sharp adversity, will teach at last
Man,—and, as we would hope,—perhaps the devil,
That neither of their intellects are vast :
While youth's hot wishes in our red veins revel,
We know not this—the blood flows on too fast ;
But as the torrent widens towards the ocean,
We ponder deeply on each past emotion.

III.

As boy, I thought myself a clever fellow,
And wish'd that others held the same opinion ;
They took it up when my days grew more mellow,
And other minds acknowledged my dominion :
Now my sere fancy “ falls into the yellow
Leaf,” and imagination droops her pinion,
And the sad truth which hovers o'er my desk
Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.

IV.

And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
'T is that I may not weep ; and if I weep,
'T is that our nature cannot always bring
Itself to apathy, for we must steep
Our hearts first in the depths of Lethe's spring,
Ere what we least wish to behold will sleep.
Thetis baptized her mortal son in Styx ;
A mortal mother would on Lethe fix.

V.

Some have accused me of a strange design
 Against the creed and morals of the land,
 And trace it in this poem every line :
 I don't pretend that I quite understand
 My own meaning when I would be *very* fine ;
 But the fact is that I have nothing plann'd,
 Unless it was to be a moment merry—
 A novel word in my vocabulary.

VI.

To the kind reader of our sober clime
 This way of writing will appear exotic :
 Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme,
 Who sung when chivalry was more Quixotic,
 And revell'd in the fancies of the time,
 True knights, chaste dames, huge giants, kings despotic ;
 But all these, save the last, being obsolete,
 I chose a modern subject as more meet.

VII.

How I have treated it, I do not know—
 Perhaps no better than they 've treated me
 Who have imputed such designs as show,
 Not what they saw, but what they wish'd to see :
 But if it gives them pleasure, be it so,—
 This is a liberal age, and thoughts are free ;
 Meantime Apollo plucks me by the ear,
 And tells me to resume my story here.

VIII.

Young Juan and his lady-love were left
 To their own hearts' most sweet society ;
 Even Time, the pitiless, in sorrow cleft
 With his rude scythe such gentle bosoms ; he
 Sigh'd to behold them of their hours bereft,
 Though foe to love ; and yet they could not be
 Meant to grow old, but die in happy spring,
 Before one charm or hope had taken wing.

IX.

Their faces were not made for wrinkles, their
 Pure blood to stagnate, their great hearts to fail ;
 The blank gray was not made to blast their hair,
 But, like the climes that know nor snow nor hail,
 They were all summer : lightning might assail
 And shiver them to ashes, but to trail
 A long and snake-like life of dull decay
 Was not for them—they had too little clay.

X.

They were alone once more ; for them to be
 Thus was another Eden ; they were never
 Weary, unless when separate : the tree
 Cut from its forest root of years—the river
 Damm'd from its fountain—the child from the knee
 And breast maternal wean'd at once for ever,
 Would wither less than these two torn apart ;
 Alas ! there is no instinct like the heart—

XI.

The heart—which may be broken. Happy they !
 Thrice fortunate ! who, of that fragile mould,
 The precious porcelain of human clay,
 Break with the first fall : they can ne'er behold
 The long year link'd with heavy day on day,
 And all which must be borne, and never told ;
 While life's strange principle will often lie
 Deepest in those who long the most to die.

XII.

“ Whom the gods love die young,” was said of yore, '
 And many deaths do they escape by this :
 The death of friends, and that which slays even more—
 The death of friendship, love, youth, all that is,
 Except mere breath : and since the silent shore
 Awaits at last even those who longest miss
 The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early grave
 Which men weep over may be meant to save.

XIII.

Haidee and Juan thought not of the dead ;
 The heavens, and earth, and air, seem'd made for them ;
 They found no fault with Time, save that he fled ;
 They saw not in themselves aught to condemn.
 Each was the other's mirror, and but read
 Joy sparkling in their dark eyes like a gem,
 And knew such brightness was but the reflection
 Of their exchanging glances of affection.

XIV.

The gentle pressure and the thrilling touch,
 The least glance better understood than words,
 Which still said all, and ne'er could say too much ;
 A language, too, but like to that of birds,
 Known but to them, at least appearing such
 As but to lovers a true sense affords ;
 Sweet playful phrases, which would seem absurd
 To those who 've ceased to hear such, or ne'er heard ;

XV.

All these were theirs, for they were children still,
 And children still they should have ever been;
 They were not made in the real world to fill
 A busy character in the dull scene;
 But like two beings born from out a rill,
 A nymph and her beloved, all unseen
 To pass their lives in fountains and on flowers,
 And never know the weight of human hours.

XVI.

Moons changing had roll'd on, and changeless found
 Those their bright rise had lighted to such joys
 As rarely they beheld throughout their round:
 And these were not of the vain kind which cloy;
 For theirs were buoyant spirits, never bound
 By the mere senses; and that which destroys
 Most love, possession, unto them appear'd
 A thing which each endearment more endear'd.

XVII.

Oh beautiful! and rare as beautiful!
 But theirs was love in which the mind delights
 To lose itself, when the old world grows dull,
 And we are sick of its hack sounds and sights,
 Intrigues, adventures of the common school,
 Its petty passions, marriages, and flights,
 Where Hymen's torch but brands one strumpet more,
 Whose husband only knows her not a wh—re.

XVIII

Hard words; harsh truth; a truth which many know.
 Enough.—The faithful and the fairy pair,
 Who never found a single hour too slow,
 What was it made them thus exempt from care?
 Young innate feelings all have felt below,
 Which perish in the rest, but in them were
 Inherent; what we mortals call romantic,
 And always envy, though we deem it frantic.

XIX.

This is in others a factitious state,
 An opium dream of too much youth and reading;
 But was in them their nature or their fate:
 No novels e'er had set their young hearts bleeding,
 For Haidee's knowledge was by no means great,
 And Juan was a boy of saintly breeding;
 So that there was no reason for their loves
 More than for those of nightingales or doves.

XX.

They gazed upon the sunset; 't is an hour
 Dear unto all, but dearest to *their* eyes,
 For it had made them what they were: the power
 Of love had first o'erwhelm'd them from such skies,
 When happiness had been their only dower,
 And twilight saw them link'd in passion's ties;
 Charm'd with each other, all things charm'd that brought
 The past still welcome as the present thought.

XXI.

I know not why, but in that hour to-night,
 Even as they gazed, a sudden tremor came,
 And swept, as 't were, across their heart's delight,
 Like the wind o'er a harp-string, or a flame,
 When one is shook in sound, and one in sight;
 And thus some boding flash'd through either frame,
 And call'd from Juan's breast a faint low sigh,
 While one new tear arose in Haidee's eye.

XXII.

That large black prophet eye seem'd to dilate
 And follow far the disappearing sun,
 As if their last day of a happy date
 With his broad, bright, and dropping orb were gone.
 Juan gazed on her as to ask his fate—
 He felt a grief, but knowing cause for none,
 His glance inquired of hers for some excuse
 For feelings causeless, or at least abstruse.

XXIII.

She turn'd to him, and smiled, but in that sort
 Which makes not others smile; then turn'd aside:
 Whatever feeling shook her, it seem'd short,
 And master'd by her wisdom or her pride.
 When Juan spoke, too—it might be in sport—
 Of this their mutual feeling, she replied—
 “If it should be so,—but—it cannot be—
 Or I at least shall not survive to see.”

XXIV.

Juan would question further, but she press'd
 His lips to hers, and silenced him with this,
 And then dismiss'd the omen from her breast,
 Defying augury with that fond kiss;
 And no doubt of all methods 't is the best:
 Some people prefer wine—'t is not amiss:
 I have tried both; so those who would a part take
 May chuse between the head-ache and the heart-ache.

XXV.

One of the two, according to your choice,
 Women or wine, you'll have to undergo ;
 Both maladies are taxes on our joys :
 But which to chuse, I really hardly know ;
 And if I had to give a casting voice,
 For both sides I could many reasons show,
 And then decide, without great wrong to either,
 It were much better to have both than neither.

XXVI.

Juan and Haidee gazed upon each other
 With swimming looks of speechless tenderness,
 Which mix'd all feelings, friend, child, lover, brother,
 All that the best can mingle and express,
 When two pure hearts are pour'd in one another,
 And love too much, and yet can not love less ;
 But almost sanctify the sweet excess
 By the immortal wish and power to bless.

XXVII.

Mix'd in each other's arms, and heart in heart,
 Why did they not then die?—they had lived too long,
 Should an hour come to bid them breathe apart ;
 Years could but bring them cruel things or wrong.
 The world was not for them, nor the world's art
 For beings passionate as Sappho's song ;
 Love was born *with* them, *in* them, so intense,
 It was their very spirit—not a sense.

XXVIII.

They should have lived together deep in woods,
 Unseen as sings the nightingale ; they were
 Unfit to mix in these thick solitudes
 Called social, haunts of hate, and vice, and care :
 How lonely every freeborn creature broods !
 The sweetest song-birds nestle in a pair ;
 The eagle soars alone ; the gull and crow
 Flock o'er their carrion, just like men below.

XXIX.

Now pillow'd, cheek to cheek, in loving sleep,
 Haidee and Juan their siesta took ;
 A gentle slumber, but it was not deep,
 For ever and anon a something shook
 Juan, and shuddering o'er his frame would creep ;
 And Haidee's sweet lips murmur'd like a brook,
 A wordless music ; and her face so fair
 Stirr'd with her dream, as rose-leaves with the air ;

XXX.

Or as the stirring of a deep clear stream
 Within an Alpine hollow, when the wind
 Walks o'er it, was she shaken by the dream,
 The mystical usurper of the mind—
 O'erpowering us to be whate'er may seem
 Good to the soul which we no more can bind ;
 Strange state of being ! (for 't is still to be)
 Senseless to feel, and with seal'd eyes to see.

XXXI.

She dream'd of being alone on the sea-shore,
 Chain'd to a rock ; she knew not how, but stir
 She could not from the spot, and the loud roar
 Grew, and each wave rose roughly, threatening her ;
 And o'er her upper lip they seem'd to pour,
 Until she sobb'd for breath, and soon they were
 Foaming o'er her lone head, so fierce and high—
 Each broke to drown her, yet she could not die.

XXXII.

Anon—she was released, and then she stray'd
 O'er the sharp shingles with her bleeding feet,
 And stumbled almost every step she made ;
 And something roll'd before her in a sheet,
 Which she must still pursue, howe'er afraid ;
 'T was white and indistinct, nor stopp'd to meet
 Her glance nor grasp, for still she gazed and grasp'd,
 And ran, but it escaped her as she clasp'd.

XXXIII.

The dream changed : in a cave she stood ; its walls
 Were hung with marble icicles ; the work
 Of ages on its water-fretted halls,
 Where waves might wash, and seals might breed and lurk ;
 Her hair was dripping, and the very balls
 Of her black eyes seem'd turn'd to tears, and mirk
 The sharp rocks look'd below each drop they caught,
 Which froze to marble as it fell, she thought.

XXXIV.

And wet, and cold, and lifeless at her feet,
 Pale as the foam that froth'd on his dead brow,
 Which she essay'd in vain to clear, (how sweet
 Were once her cares, how idle seem'd they now !)
 Lay Juan, nor could aught renew the beat
 Of his quench'd heart ; and the sea dirges low
 Rang in her sad ears like a mermaid's song,
 And that brief dream appear'd a life too long.

XXXV.

And gazing on the dead, she thought his face
 Faded, or alter'd into something new—
 Like to her father's features, till each trace
 More like and like to Lambro's aspect grew—
 With all his keen worn look and Grecian grace ;
 And starting, she awoke, and what to view ?
 Oh ! Powers of Heaven ! what dark eye meets she there ?
 'T is—'t is her father's—fix'd upon the pair !

XXXVI.

Then shrieking, she arose, and shrieking fell,
 With joy and sorrow, hope and fear to see
 Him whom she deem'd a habitant where dwell
 The ocean-buried, risen from death, to be
 Perchance the death of one she loved too well :
 Dear as her father had been to Haidee,
 It was a moment of that awful kind—
 I have seen such—but must not call to mind.

XXXVII.

Up Juan sprung to Haidee's bitter shriek,
 And caught her falling, and from off the wall
 Snatch'd down his sabre, in hot haste to wreak
 Vengeance on him who was the cause of all :
 Then Lambro, who till now forbore to speak,
 Smil'd scornfully, and said, "Within my call
 A thousand scimitars await the word ;
 Put up, young man, put up your silly sword."

XXXVIII.

And Haidee clung around him : "Juan, 't is—
 'T is Lambro—'t is my father ! Kneel with me—
 He will forgive us—yes—it must be—yes.
 Oh ! dearest father, in this agony
 Of pleasure and of pain—even while I kiss
 Thy garment's hem with transport, can it be
 That doubt should mingle with my filial joy ?
 Deal with me as thou wilt, but spare this boy."

XXXIX.

High and inscrutable the old man stood,
 Calm in his voice, and calm within his eye—
 Not always signs with him of calmest mood :
 He look'd upon her, but gave no reply ;
 Then turn'd to Juan, in whose cheek the blood
 Oft came and went, as there resolved to die ;
 In arms, at least, he stood, in act to spring
 On the first foe whom Lambro's call might bring.

XL.

“Young man, your sword ;” so Lambro once more said :
 Juan replied, “Not while this arm is free.”
 The old man’s cheek grew pale, but not with dread ;
 And, drawing from his belt a pistol, he
 Replied, “Your blood be then on your own head !”
 Then look’d close at the flint, as if to see
 ’T was fresh—for he had lately used the lock—
 And next proceeded quietly to cock.

XLI.

It has a strange quick jar upon the ear,
 That cocking of a pistol, when you know
 A moment more will bring the sight to bear
 Upon your person, twelve yards off, or so ;
 A gentlemanly distance, not too near,
 If you have got a former friend for foe ;
 But after having been fired at once or twice,
 The ear becomes more Irish and less nice.

XLII.

Lambro presented, and one instant more
 Had stopp’d this canto, and Don Juan’s breath,
 When Haidee threw herself her boy before ;
 Stern as her sire : “On me,” she cried, “let death
 Descend—the fault is mine ; this fatal shore
 He found—but sought not. I have pledg’d my faith—
 I love him—I will die with him : I knew
 Your nature’s firmness—know your daughter’s too.”

XLIII.

A minute past, and she had been all tears,
 And tenderness, and infancy : but now
 She stood as one who champion’d human fears—
 Pale, statue-like, and stern, she woo’d the blow ;
 And tall beyond her sex and their compeers,
 She drew up to her height, as if to show
 A fairer mark ; and with a fix’d eye scann’d
 Her father’s face—but never stopp’d his hand.

XLIV.

He gazed on her, and she on him ; ’t was strange
 How like they look’d ! the expression was the same—
 Serenely savage, with a little change
 In the large dark eyes’ mutual darted flame ;
 For she too was as one who could avenge,
 If cause should be—a lioness, though tame :
 Her father’s blood before her father’s face
 Boil’d up, and proved her truly of his race.

XLV.

I said they were alike, their features and
 Their stature differing but in sex and years ;
 Even to the delicacy of their hand
 There was resemblance, such as true blood wears ;
 And now to see them, thus divided, stand
 In fix'd ferocity, when joyous tears,
 And sweet sensations, should have welcomed both,
 Show what the passions are in their full growth.

XLVI.

The father paused a moment, then withdrew
 His weapon, and replaced it ; but stood still,
 And looking on her, as to look her through,
 " Not I," he said, " have sought this stranger's ill ;
 Not I have made this desolation : few
 Would bear such outrage, and forbear to kill ;
 But I must do my duty—how thou hast
 Done thine, the present vouches for the past.

XLVII.

" Let him disarm ; or, by my father's head,
 His own shall roll before you like a ball !"
 He raised his whistle, as the word he said,
 And blew ; another answer'd to the call,
 And rushing in disorderly, though led,
 And arm'd from boot to turban, one and all,
 Some twenty of his train came, rank on rank ;
 He gave the word, " Arrest or slay the Frank."

XLVIII.

Then, with a sudden movement, he withdrew
 His daughter ; while compress'd within his clasp,
 'Twixt her and Juan interposed the crew ;
 In vain she struggled in her father's clasp—
 His arms were like a serpent's coil : then flew
 Upon their prey, as darts an angry asp,
 The file of pirates ; save the foremost, who
 Had fallen, with his right shoulder half cut through.

XLIX.

The second had his cheek laid open ; but
 The third, a wary cool old sworder, took
 The blows upon his cutlass, and then put
 His own well in ; so well, ere you could look,
 His man was floor'd, and helpless at his foot,
 With the blood running like a little brook
 From two smart sabre gashes, deep and red—
 One on the arm, the other on the head.

L.

And then they bound him where he fell, and bore
 Juan from the apartment: with a sign
 Old Lambro bade them take him to the shore,
 Where lay some ships which were to sail at nine.
 They laid him in a boat, and plied the oar
 Until they reach'd some galliots, placed in line;
 On board of one of these, and under hatches,
 They stow'd him, with strict orders to the watches.

LI.

The world is full of strange vicissitudes,
 And here was one exceedingly unpleasant:
 A gentleman so rich in the world's goods,
 Handsome and young, enjoying all the present,
 Just at the very time when he least broods
 On such a thing, is suddenly to sea sent,
 Wounded and chain'd, so that he cannot move,
 And all because a lady fell in love.

LII.

Here I must leave him, for I grow pathetic,
 Moved by the Chinese nymph of tears, green tea!
 Than whom Cassandra was not more prophetic;
 For if my pure libations exceed three,
 I feel my heart become so sympathetic,
 That I must have recourse to black bohea;
 'T is pity wine should be so deleterious,
 For tea and coffee leave us much more serious,

LIII.

Unless when qualified with thee, Cognac!
 Sweet Naiad of the Phlegethontic rill!
 Ah! why the liver wilt thou thus attack,
 And make, like other nymphs, thy lovers ill?
 I would take refuge in weak punch, but *rack*
 (In each sense of the word), whene'er I fill
 My mind and midnight beakers to the brim,
 Wakes me next morning with its synonym.

LIV.

I leave Don Juan for the present safe—
 Not sound, poor fellow, but severely wounded;
 Yet could his corporal pangs amount to half
 Of those with which his Haidee's bosom bounded?
 She was not one to weep, and rave, and chafe,
 And then give way, subdued because surrounded;
 Her mother was a Moorish maid, from Fez,
 Where all is Eden, or a wilderness.

LV.

There the large olive rains its amber store
 In marble fonts; there grain, and flower, and fruit,
 Gush from the earth until the land runs o'er;
 But there too many a poison-tree has root,
 And midnight listens to the lion's roar,
 And long, long deserts scorch the camel's foot,
 Or heaving whelm the helpless caravan,—
 And as the soil is, so the heart of man.

LVI.

Afric is all the sun's, and as her earth
 Her human clay is kindled; full of power
 For good or evil, burning from its birth,
 The Moorish blood partakes the planet's hour,
 And like the soil beneath it will bring forth:
 Beauty and love were Haidee's mother's dower;
 But her large dark eye show'd deep passion's force,
 Though sleeping like a lion near a source.

LVII.

Her daughter, temper'd with a milder ray,
 Like summer clouds all silvery, smooth, and fair,
 Till slowly charged with thunder they display
 Terror to earth, and tempest to the air,
 Had held till now her soft and milky way;
 But, overwrought with passion and despair,
 The fire burst forth from her Numidian veins,
 Even as the simoom sweeps the blasted plains.

LVIII.

The last sight which she saw was Juan's gore,
 And he himself o'ermaster'd and cut down;
 His blood was running on the very floor
 Where late he trod, her beautiful, her own:
 Thus much she view'd an instant, and no more,—
 Her struggles ceased with one convulsive groan
 On her sire's arm, which until now scarce held
 Her writhing, fell she like a cedar fell'd.

LIX.

A vein had burst, ² and her sweet lips' pure dyes
 Were dabbled with the deep blood which ran o'er;
 And her head droop'd as when the lily lies
 O'ercharged with rain: her summon'd handmaids bore
 Their lady to her couch with gushing eyes;
 Of herbs and cordials they produced their store,
 But she defied all means they could employ,
 Like one life could not hold, nor death destroy.

LX.

Days lay she in that state unchanged, though chill,
 With nothing livid, still her lips were red ;
 She had no pulse, but death seem'd absent still ;
 No hideous sign proclaim'd her surely dead ;
 Corruption came not, in each mind to kill
 All hope ; to look upon her sweet face bred
 New thoughts of life, for it seem'd full of soul,
 She had so much, earth could not claim the whole.

LXI.

The ruling passion, such as marble shows
 When exquisitely chisell'd, still lay there,
 But fix'd as marble's unchanged aspect throws
 O'er the fair Venus, but for ever fair ;
 O'er the Laocoon's all eternal throes,
 And ever-dying Gladiator's air,
 Their energy like life forms all their fame,
 Yet looks not life, for they are still the same.

LXII.

She woke at length, but not as sleepers wake,
 Rather the dead, for life seem'd something new,
 A strange sensation which she must partake
 Perforce, since whatsoever met her view
 Struck not on memory, though a heavy ache
 Lay at her heart, whose earliest beat still true
 Brought back the sense of pain without the cause,
 For, for a while, the furies made a pause.

LXIII.

She look'd on many a face with vacant eye,
 On many a token without knowing what ;
 She saw them watch her without asking why,
 And reck'd not who around her pillow sat ;
 Not speechless, though she spoke not : not a sigh
 Relieved her thoughts ; dull silence and quick chat
 Were tried in vain by those who served ; she gave
 No sign, save breath, of having left the grave.

LXIV.

Her handmaids tended, but she heeded not ;
 Her father watch'd, she turn'd her eyes away ;
 She recognised no being, and no spot,
 However dear or cherish'd in their day :
 They changed from room to room, but all forgot,
 Gentle, but without memory, she lay ;
 And yet those eyes, which they would fain be weaning
 Back to old thoughts, seem'd full of fearful meaning.

LXV.

At last a slave bethought her of a harp ;
 The harper came, and tuned his instrument ;
 At the first notes, irregular and sharp,
 On him her flashing eyes a moment bent,
 Then to the wall she turn'd, as if to warp
 Her thoughts from sorrow through her heart re-sent,
 And he began a long low island song
 Of ancient days, ere tyranny grew strong.

LXVI.

Anon her thin wan fingers beat the wall
 In time to his old tune ; he changed the theme,
 And sung of love, the fierce name struck through all
 Her recollection ; on her flash'd the dream
 Of what she was, and is, if ye could call
 To be so being ; in a gushing stream
 The tears rush'd forth from her o'erclouded brain,
 Like mountain mists at length dissolved in rain.

LXVII.

Short solace, vain relief ! thought came too quick,
 And whirl'd her brain to madness ; she arose
 As one who ne'er had dwelt among the sick,
 And flew at all she met, as on her foes ;
 But no one ever heard her speak or shriek,
 Although her paroxysm drew towards its close :
 Hers was a frenzy which disdain'd to rave,
 Even when they smote her, in the hope to save.

LXVIII.

Yet she betray'd at times a gleam of sense ;
 Nothing could make her meet her father's face,
 Though on all other things with looks intense
 She gazed, but none she ever could retrace ;
 Food she refused, and raiment : no pretence
 Avail'd for either ; neither change of place,
 Nor time, nor skill, nor remedy, could give her
 Senses to sleep—the power seem'd gone for ever.

LXIX.

Twelve days and nights she wither'd thus ; at last,
 Without a groan, or sigh, or glance, to show
 A parting pang, the spirit from her pass'd :
 And they who watch'd her nearest could not know
 The very instant, till the change that cast
 Her sweet face into shadow, dull and slow,
 Glazed o'er her eyes—the beautiful, the black—
 Oh ! to possess such lustre—and then lack !

LXX.

She died, but not alone ; she held within
 A second principle of life, which might
 Have dawn'd a fair and sinless child of sin,
 But closed its little being without light,
 And went down to the grave unborn, wherein
 Blossom and bough lie wither'd with one blight ;
 In vain the dews of heaven descend above
 The bleeding flower and blasted fruit of love.

LXXI.

Thus lived—thus died she ; never more on her
 Shall sorrow light, or shame. She was not made
 Through years or moons the inner weight to bear,
 Which colder hearts endure, till they are laid
 By age in earth ; her days and pleasures were
 Brief, but delightful—such as had not stay'd
 Long with her destiny : but she sleeps well
 By the sea-shore, whereon she loved to dwell.

LXXII.

That isle is now all desolate and bare,
 Its dwellings down, its tenants pass'd away ;
 None but her own and father's grave is there,
 And nothing outward tells of human clay :
 Ye could not know where lies a thing so fair—
 No stone is there to show, no tongue to say
 What was ; no dirge, except the hollow sea's,
 Mourns o'er the beauty of the Cyclades.

LXXIII.

But many a Greek maid in a loving song
 Sighs o'er her name, and many an islander
 With her sire's story makes the night less long ;
 Valour was his, and beauty dwelt with her.
 If she loved rashly, her life paid for wrong—
 A heavy price must all pay who thus err,
 In some shape ; let none think to fly the danger,
 For, soon or late, Love is his own avenger.

LXXIV.

But let me change this theme, which grows too sad,
 And lay this sheet of sorrows on the shelf ;
 I don't much like describing people mad,
 For fear of seeming rather touch'd myself—
 Besides, I've no more on this head to add :
 And as my Muse is a capricious elf,
 We'll put about and try another tack
 With Juan, left half-kill'd some stanzas back.

LXXV.

Wounded and fetter'd, "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd,"
 Some days and nights elapsed before that he
 Could altogether call the past to mind ;
 And when he did, he found himself at sea,
 Sailing six knots an hour before the wind :
 The shores of Ilion lay beneath their lee—
 Another time he might have liked to see 'em,
 But now was not much pleased with Cape Sigæum.

LXXVI.

There, on the green and village-cotted hill, is
 (Flank'd by the Hellespont and by the sea)
 Entomb'd the bravest of the brave, Achilles ;
 They say so—(Bryant says the contrary) —
 And further downward, tall and towering, still is
 The tumulus—of whom?—Heaven knows ; 't may be
 Patroclus, Ajax, or Protesilaus,—
 All heroes who, if living still, would slay us.

LXXVII.

High barrows, without marble or a name,
 A vast, untill'd, and mountain-skirted plain,
 And Ida in the distance, still the same,
 And old Scamander (if 't is he), remain ;
 The situation seems still form'd for fame—
 A hundred thousand men might fight again
 With ease ; but where I sought for Ilion's walls,
 The quiet sheep feeds, and the tortoise crawls :

LXXVIII.

Troops of untended horses ; here and there
 Some little hamlets with new names uncouth ;
 Some shepherds (unlike Paris), led to stare
 A moment at the European youth
 Whom to the spot their school-boy feelings bear ;
 A Turk, with beads in hand and pipe in mouth,
 Extremely taken with his own religion,
 Are what I found there—but the devil a Phrygian !

LXXXIX.

Don Juan, here permitted to emerge
 From his dull cabin, found himself a slave ;
 Forlorn, and gazing on the deep blue surge,
 O'ershadow'd there by many a hero's grave :
 Weak still with loss of blood, he scarce could urge
 A few brief questions ; and the answers gave
 No very satisfactory information
 About his past or present situation.

LXXX.

He saw some fellow-captives, who appear'd
 To be Italians—as they were in fact;
 From them, at least, *their* destiny he heard,
 Which was an odd one ; a troop going to act
 In Sicily—all singers, duly rear'd
 In their vocation,—had not been attack'd,
 In sailing from Livorno, by the pirate,
 But sold by the impresario at no high rate.³

LXXXI.

By one of these, the buffo of the party,
 Juan was told about their curious case ;
 For, although destined to the Turkish mart, he
 Still kept his spirits up—at least his face ;
 The little fellow really looked quite hearty,
 And bore him with some gaiety and grace,
 Showing a much more reconciled demeanour
 Than did the prima donna and the tenor.

LXXXII.

In a few words he told their hapless story,
 Saying, “ Our Machiavelian impresario,
 Making a signal off some promontory,
 Hail'd a strange brig ; Corpo di Caio Mario !
 We were transferr'd on board her in a hurry,
 Without a single scudo of salario ;
 But, if the sultan has a taste for song,
 We will revive our fortunes before long.

LXXXIII.

“ The prima donna, though a little old,
 And haggard with a dissipated life,
 And subject, when the house is thin, to cold,
 Has some good notes ; and then the tenor's wife,
 With no great voice, is pleasing to behold ;
 Last carnival she made a deal of strife
 By carrying off Count Cæsar Cicogna
 From an old Roman princess at Bologna.

LXXXIV.

“ And then there are the dancers ; there 's the Nini,
 With more than one profession gains by all ;
 Then there 's that laughing slut, the Pellegrini,
 She too was fortunate last carnival,
 And made at least five hundred good zecchini,
 But spends so fast, she has not now a paul ;
 And then there 's the Grotesca—such a dancer !
 Where men have souls or bodies she must answer.

LXXXV.

“As for the figuranti, they are like
 The rest of all that tribe; with here and there
 A pretty person, which perhaps may strike,
 The rest are hardly fitted for a fair;
 There 's one, though tall and stiffer than a pike,
 Yet has a sentimental kind of air,
 Which might go far, but she don't dance with vigour;
 The more 's the pity, with her face and figure.

LXXXVI.

“As for the men, they are a middling set;
 The musico is but a crack'd old basin,
 But being qualified in one way yet,
 May the seraglio do to set his face in,
 And as a servant some preferment get;
 His singing I no further trust can place in:
 From all the pope ⁴ makes yearly, 't would perplex
 To find three perfect pipes of the *third* sex.

LXXXVII.

“The tenor's voice is spoilt by affectation,
 And for the bass, the beast can only bellow;
 In fact, he had no singing education,
 An ignorant, noteless, timeless, tuneless fellow;
 But being the prima donna's near relation,
 Who swore his voice was very rich and mellow,
 They hired him, though to hear him you 'd believe
 An ass was practising recitative.

LXXXVIII.

“'T would not become myself to dwell upon
 My own merits, and, though young—I see, sir—you
 Have got a travell'd air, which shows you one
 To whom the opera is by no means new:
 You 've heard of Raucocanti?—I 'm the man;
 The time may come when you may hear me too;
 You was not last year at the fair of Lugo,
 But next, when I 'm engaged to sing there—do go.

LXXXIX.

“Our baritone I almost had forgot,
 A pretty lad, but bursting with conceit;
 With graceful action, science not a jot,
 A voice of no great compass, and not sweet,
 He always is complaining of his lot,
 Forsooth, scarce fit for ballads in the street;
 In lovers' parts his passion more to breathe,
 Having no heart to show, he shows his teeth.”

XC.

Here Raucocanti's eloquent recital
 Was interrupted by the pirate crew,
 Who came at stated moments to invite all
 The captives back to their sad births : each threw
 A rueful glance upon the waves (which bright all
 From the blue skies derived a double blue,
 Dancing all free and happy in the sun),
 And then went down the hatchway one by one.

XCI.

They heard, next day, that in the Dardanelles,
 Waiting for his Sublimity's firman—
 The most imperative of sovereign spells,
 Which every body does without who can,—
 More to secure them in their naval cells,
 Lady to lady, well as man to man,
 Were to be chain'd and lotted out per couple
 For the slave-market of Constantinople.

XCII.

It seems when this allotment was made out,
 There chanced to be an odd male and odd female,
 Who (after some discussion and some doubt
 If the soprano might be doom'd to be male,
 They placed him o'er the women as a scout)
 Were link'd together, and it happen'd the male
 Was Juan, who—an awkward thing at his age—
 Pair'd off with a Bacchante blooming visage.

XCIII.

With Raucocanti lucklessly was chain'd
 The tenor ; these two hated with a hate
 Found only on the stage, and each more pain'd
 With this his tuneful neighbour than his fate ;
 Sad strife arose, for they were so cross-grain'd,
 Instead of bearing up without debate,
 That each pull'd different ways with many an oath,
 "Arcades ambo," *id est*—blackguards both.

XCIV.

Juan's companion was a Romagnole,
 But bred within the March of old Ancona,
 With eyes that look'd into the very soul
 (And other chief points of a "bella donna"),
 Bright—and as black and burning as a coal ;
 And through her clear Brunette complexion shone a
 Great wish to please—a most attractive dower,
 Especially when added to the power.

XCV.

But all that power was wasted upon him,
 For sorrow o'er each sense held stern command ;
 Her eye might flash on his, but found it dim ;
 And though thus chain'd, as natural her hand
 Touch'd his, nor that—nor any handsome limb
 (And she had some not easy to withstand)
 Could stir his pulse, or make his faith feel brittle ;
 Perhaps his recent wounds might help a little.

XCVI.

No matter ; we should ne'er too much inquire,
 But facts are facts :—no knight could be more true,
 And firmer faith no ladye-love desire ;
 We will omit the proofs, save one or two.
 'T is said no one in hand "can hold a fire
 By thought of frosty Caucasus," but few
 I really think ; yet Juan's then ordeal
 Was more triumphant, and not much less real.

XCVII.

Here I might enter on a chaste description,
 Having withstood temptation in my youth,
 But hear that several people take exception
 At the first two books having too much truth ;
 Therefore I 'll make Don Juan leave the ship soon,
 Because the publisher declares, in sooth,
 Through needles' eyes it easier for the camel is
 To pass, than those two cantos into families.

XCVIII.

'T is all the same to me, I 'm fond of yielding,
 And therefore leave them to the purer page
 Of Smollet, Prior, Ariosto, Fielding,
 Who say strange things for so correct an age.
 I once had great alacrity in wielding
 My pen, and liked poetic war to wage,
 And recollect the time when all this cant
 Would have provoked remarks which now it shan't.

XCIX.

As boys love rows, my boyhood liked a squabble ;
 But at this hour I wish to part in peace,
 Leaving such to the literary rabble,
 Whether my verse's fame be doom'd to cease,
 While the right hand which wrote it still is able,
 Or of some centuries to take a lease ;
 The grass upon my grave will grow as long,
 And sigh to midnight winds, but not to song.

C.

Of poets who come down to us through distance
 Of time and tongues, the foster-babes of fame,
 Life seems the smallest portion of existence ;
 Where twenty ages gather o'er a name,
 'T is as a snowball which derives assistance
 From every flake, and yet rolls on the same,
 Even till an iceberg it may chance to grow,—
 But, after all, 't is nothing but cold snow.

CI.

And so great names are nothing more than nominal,
 And love of glory 's but an airy lust,
 Too often in its fury overcoming all
 Who would, as 't were, identify their dust
 From out the wide destruction which, entombing all,
 Leaves nothing till the coming of the just—
 Save change : I 've stood upon Achilles' tomb,
 And heard Troy doubted ; time will doubt of Rome.

CII.

The very generations of the dead
 Are swept away, and tomb inherits tomb,
 Until the memory of an age is fled,
 And, buried, sinks beneath its offspring's doom :
 Where are the epitaphs our fathers read ?
 Save a few glean'd from the sepulchral gloom,
 Which once-named myriads nameless lie beneath,
 And lose their own in universal death.

CIII.

I canter by the spot each afternoon
 Where perish'd in his fame the hero-boy,
 Who lived too long for men, but died too soon
 For human vanity, the young De Foix !
 A broken pillar, not uncouthly hewn,
 But which neglect is hastening to destroy,
 Records Ravenna's carnage on its face,
 While weeds and ordure rankle round the base.⁵

CIV.

I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid ;
 A little cupola, more neat than solemn,
 Protects his dust, but reverence here is paid
 To the bard's tomb and not the warrior's column.
 The time must come when both, alike decay'd,
 The chieftain's trophy and the poet's volume,
 Will sink where lie the songs and wars of earth,
 Before Pelides' death or Homer's birth.

CV.

With human blood that column was cemented,
 With human filth that column is defiled,
 As if the peasant's coarse contempt were vented,
 To show his loathing of the spot he soil'd.
 Thus is the trophy used, and thus lamented
 Should ever be those blood-hounds, from whose wild
 Instinct of gore and glory earth has known
 Those sufferings Dante saw in hell alone.

CVI.

Yet there will still be bards; though fame is smoke,
 Its fumes are frankincense to human thought;
 And the unquiet feelings, which first woke
 Song in the world, will seek what then they sought;
 As on the beach the waves at last are broke,
 Thus to their extreme verge the passions brought,
 Dash into poetry, which is but passion,
 Or at least was so ere it grew a fashion.

CVII.

If in the course of such a life as was
 At once adventurous and contemplative,
 Men who partake all passions as they pass,
 Acquire the deep and bitter power to give
 Their images again as in a glass,
 And in such colours that they seem to live;
 You may do right forbidding them to show 'em,
 But spoil (I think) a very pretty poem.

CVIII.

Oh! ye, who make the fortunes of all books!
 Benign ceruleans of the second sex!
 Who advertise new poems by your looks,
 Your "imprimatur" will ye not annex?
 What, must I go to the oblivious cooks,—
 Those Cornish plunderers of Parnassian wrecks?
 Ah! must I then the only minstrel be
 Proscribed from tasting your Castalian tea?

CIX.

What, can I prove "a lion" then no more?
 A ball-room bard, a foolscap, hot-press darling?
 To bear the compliments of many a bore,
 And sigh "I can't get out," like Yorick's starling;
 Why then I'll swear, as poet Wordy swore
 (Because the world won't read him, always snarling),
 That taste is gone, that fame is but a lottery,
 Drawn by the blue-coat misses of a coterie.

CX.

Oh! "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue,"
 As some one somewhere sings about the sky,
 And I, ye learned ladies, say of you;
 They say your stockings are so (Heaven knows why,
 I have examined few pair of that hue);
 Blue as the garters which serenely lie
 Round the patrician left-legs, which adorn
 The festal midnight and the levee morn.

CXI.

Yet some of you are most seraphic creatures:
 But times are alter'd since, a rhyming lover,
 You read my stanzas, and I read your features:
 And—but no matter, all those things are over.
 Still I have no dislike to learned natures,
 For sometimes such a world of virtues cover:
 I knew one woman of that purple school,
 The loveliest, chastest, best, but—quite a fool.

CXII.

Humboldt, "the first of travellers," but not
 The last, if late accounts be accurate,
 Invented, by some name I have forgot,
 As well as the sublime discovery's date,
 An airy instrument, with which he sought
 To ascertain the atmospheric state,
 By measuring "the *intensity of blue*:"
 Oh, Lady Daphne! let me measure you!

CXIII.

But to the narrative.—The vessel bound
 With slaves to sell off in the capital,
 After the usual process, might be found
 At anchor under the seraglio wall:
 Her cargo, from the plague being safe and sound,
 Were landed in the market, one and all,
 And there, with Georgians, Russians, and Circassians,
 Bought up for different purposes and passions.

CXIV.

Some went off dearly; fifteen hundred dollars
 For one Circassian, a sweet girl, were given,
 Warranted virgin; beauty's brightest colours
 Had deck'd her out in all the hues of heaven:
 Her sale sent home some disappointed bawlers,
 Who bade on till the hundreds reach'd eleven;
 But when the offer went beyond, they knew
 'T was for the sultan, and at once withdrew.

CXV.

Twelve negresses from Nubia brought a price
 Which the West-Indian market scarce would bring;
 Though Wilberforce, at last, has made it twice
 What 't was ere abolition; and the thing
 Need not seem very wonderful, for vice
 Is always much more splendid than a king:
 The virtues, even the most exalted, charity,
 Are saving—vice spares nothing for a rarity.

CXVI.

But for the destiny of this young troop,
 How some were bought by pachas, some by Jews,
 How some to burdens were obliged to stoop,
 And others rose to the command of crews,
 As renegadoes; while in hapless group,
 Hoping no very old vizier might chuse,
 The females stood, as one by one they pick'd 'em,
 To make a mistress, or fourth wife, or victim.

CXVII.

All this must be reserved for further song;
 Also our hero's lot, howe'er unpleasant
 (Because this canto has become too long),
 Must be postponed discreetly for the present;
 I 'm sensible redundancy is wrong,
 But could not for the muse of me put less in 't:
 And now delay the progress of Don Juan,
 Till what is call'd in Ossian the fifth Duan.

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

Note 1. Stanza xii.

See Herodotus.

Note 2. Stanza lix.

This is no very uncommon effect of the violence of conflicting and different passions. The Doge Francis Foscari, on his deposition, in 1457, hearing the bells of St. Mark announce the election of his successor, "*mourut subitement d'une hémorragie causée par une veine qui s'éclata dans sa poitrine*" (See Sismondi and Daru, vols. i. and ii.), at the age of eighty years, when "*who would have thought the old man had so much blood in him?*" Before I was sixteen years of age, I was witness to a melancholy instance of the same effect of mixed passions upon a young person, who, however, did not die in consequence, at that time, but fell a victim some years afterwards to a seizure of the same kind, arising from causes intimately connected with agitation of mind.

Note 3. Stanza lxxx.

This is a fact. A few years ago a man engaged a company for some foreign theatre, embarked them at an Italian port, and, carrying them to Algiers, sold them all. One of the women, returned from her captivity, I heard sing, by a strange coincidence, in Rossini's opera of "*L'Italiana in Algeri*," at Venice, in the beginning of 1817.—[We have reason to believe that the following, which we take from the MS. journal of a highly respectable traveller, is a more correct account: "In 1812, a Signor Guariglia induced several young persons of both sexes—none of them exceeding fifteen years of age—to accompany him on an operatic excursion; part to form the opera, and part the ballet. He contrived to get them on board a vessel, which took them to Janina, where he sold them for the basest purposes. Some died from the effect of the climate, and some from suffering. Among the few who returned were a Signor Molinari, and a female dancer, named Bomfiglia, who afterwards became the wife of Crespi, the tenor singer. The wretch who so basely sold them was, when Lord Byron resided at Venice, employed as capo de' vestarj, or head tailor, at the Fenice."—GRAHAM.]

Note 4. Stanza lxxxvi.

It is strange that it should be the Pope and the Sultan who are the chief encouragers of this branch of trade—women being prohibited as singers at St. Peter's, and not deemed trust-worthy as guardians of the haram.

Note 5. Stanza ciii.

The pillar which records the battle of Ravenna is about two miles from the city, on the opposite side of the river to the road towards Forli. Gaston de Foix, who gained the battle, was killed in it; there fell on both sides twenty thousand men. The present state of the pillar and its site is described in the text.



CANTO V.

I.

WHEN amatory poets sing their loves
 In liquid lines mellifluously bland,
 And pair their rhymes as Venus yokes her doves,
 They little think what mischief is in hand ;
 The greater their success the worse it proves,
 As Ovid's verse may give to understand ;
 Even Petrarch's self, if judged with due severity,
 Is the Platonic pimp of all posterity.

II.

I therefore do denounce all amorous writing,
 Except in such a way as not to attract ;
 Plain—simple—short, and by no means inviting,
 But with a moral to each error tack'd,
 Form'd rather for instructing than delighting,
 And with all passions in their turn attack'd.
 Now, if my Pegasus should not be shod ill,
 This poem will become a moral model.

III.

The European with the Asian shore
 Sprinkled with palaces ; the ocean stream¹
 Here and there studded with a seventy-four ;
 Sophia's cupola with golden gleam ;
 The cypress groves ; Olympus high and hoar ;
 The twelve isles, and the more than I could dream,
 Far less describe, present the very view
 Which charm'd the charming Mary Montagu.

IV.

I have a passion for the name of "Mary,"
 For once it was a magic sound to me,
 And still it half calls up the realms of fairy,
 Where I beheld what never was to be ;
 All feelings changed, but this was last to vary,
 A spell from which even yet I'm not quite free :
 But I grow sad—and let a tale grow cold,
 Which must not be pathetically told.

V.

The wind swept down the Euxine, and the wave
 Broke foaming o'er the blue Symplegades :
 'T is a grand sight from off "the Giant's Grave,"
 To watch the progress of those rolling seas
 Between the Bosphorus, as they lash and lave
 Europe and Asia, you being quite at ease ;
 There 's not a sea the passenger e'er pukes in,
 Turns up more dangerous breakers than the Euxine.

VI.

'T was a raw day of Autumn's bleak beginning,
 When nights are equal, but not so the days ;
 The Parcae then cut short the further spinning
 Of seamen's fates, and the loud tempests raise
 The waters, and repentance for past sinning
 In all who o'er the great deep take their ways :
 They vow to amend their lives, and yet they don't ;
 Because if drown'd, they can't—if spared, they won't.

VII.

A crowd of shivering slaves of every nation,
 And age, and sex, were in the market ranged ;
 Each bevy with the merchant in his station :
 Poor creatures ! their good looks were sadly changed,
 All save the blacks seem'd jaded with vexation,
 From friends, and home, and freedom far estranged ;
 The negroes more philosophy display'd,—
 Used to it, no doubt, as eels are to be flay'd.

VIII.

Juan was juvenile, and thus was full,
 As most at his age are, of hope and health ;
 Yet, I must own, he look'd a little dull,
 And now and then a tear stole down by stealth ;
 Perhaps his recent loss of blood might pull
 His spirits down ; and then the loss of wealth,
 A mistress, and such comfortable quarters,
 To be put up for auction amongst Tartars,

IX.

Were things to shake a stoic ; ne'ertheless,
 Upon the whole his carriage was serene :
 His figure, and the splendour of his dress,
 Of which some gilded remnants still were seen,
 Drew all eyes on him, giving them to guess
 He was above the vulgar by his mien ;
 And then, though pale, he was so very handsome ;
 And then—they calculated on his ransom.

X.

Like a backgammon-board the place was dotted
 With whites and blacks, in groups on show for sale,
 Though rather more irregularly spotted :
 Some bought the jet, while others chose the pale.
 It chanced, amongst the other people lotted,
 A man of thirty, rather stout and hale,
 With resolution in his dark gray eye,
 Next Juan stood, till some might chuse to buy.

XI.

He had an English look ; that is, was square
 In make, of a complexion white and ruddy,
 Good teeth, with curling rather dark brown hair,
 And, it might be from thought, or toil, or study,
 An open brow a little mark'd with care :
 One arm had on a bandage rather bloody ;
 And there he stood with such *sang-froid*, that greater
 Could scarce be shown even by a mere spectator.

XII.

But seeing at his elbow a mere lad,
 Of a high spirit evidently, though
 At present weigh'd down by a doom which had
 O'erthrown even men, he soon began to show
 A kind of blunt compassion for the sad
 Lot of so young a partner in the woe,
 Which for himself he seem'd to deem no worse
 Than any other scrape—a thing of course.

XIII.

“ My boy ! ” said he, “ amidst this motley crew
 Of Georgians, Russians, Nubians, and what not,
 All ragamuffins differing but in hue,
 With whom it is our luck to cast our lot,
 The only gentlemen seem I and you ;
 So let us be acquainted, as we ought :
 If I could yield you any consolation,
 'T would give me pleasure :—Pray, what is your nation ? ”

XIV.

When Juan answer'd “ Spanish ! ” he replied,
 “ I thought, in fact, you could not be a Greek ;
 Those servile dogs are not so proudly eyed :
 Fortune has play'd you here a pretty freak,
 But that 's her way with all men till they 're tried :
 But never mind,—she 'll turn, perhaps, next week ;
 She has served me also much the same as you,
 Except that I have found it nothing new.”

XV.

"Pray, sir," said Juan, "if I may presume,
What brought you here?"—"Oh! nothing very rare—
 Six Tartars and a drag-chain——"—"To this doom
 But what conducted, if the question's fair,
 Is that which I would learn."—"I served for some
 Months with the Russian army here and there,
 And taking lately, by Suwarrow's bidding,
 A town, was ta'en myself instead of Widdin."

XVI.

"Have you no friends?"—"I had—but, by God's blessing,
 Have not been troubled with them lately. Now
 I have answer'd all your questions without pressing,
 And you an equal courtesy should show."—
 "Alas!" said Juan, "'t were a tale distressing,
 And long besides."—"Oh! if 't is really so,
 You're right on both accounts to hold your tongue;
 A sad tale saddens doubly when 't is long."

XVII.

"But droop not: Fortune at your time of life,
 Although a female moderately fickle,
 Will hardly leave you (as she's not your wife)
 For any length of days in such a pickle.
 To strive too with our fate were such a strife
 As if the corn-sheaf should oppose the sickle:
 Men are the sport of circumstances, when
 The circumstances seem the sport of men."

XVIII.

"'T is not," said Juan, "for my present doom
 I mourn, but for the past;—I loved a maid:"
 He paused, and his dark eye grew full of gloom;
 A single tear upon his eyelash staid
 A moment, and then dropp'd; "but to resume,
 'T is not my present lot, as I have said,
 Which I deplore so much; for I have borne
 Hardships which have the hardestst overworn,

XIX.

"On the rough deep. But this last blow—" and here
 He stopp'd again, and turn'd away his face.
 "Ay," quoth his friend, "I thought it would appear
 That there had been a lady in the case;
 And these are things which ask a tender tear,
 Such as I too would shed if in your place:
 I cried upon my first wife's dying day,
 And also when my second ran away:

XX.

“My third”—“Your third!” quoth Juan, turning round;
 “You scarcely can be thirty, have you three?”
 “No—only two at present above ground:
 Surely ’t is nothing wonderful to see
 One person thrice in holy wedlock bound!”
 “Well, then, your third,” said Juan; “what did she?
 She did not run away, too, did she, sir?”
 “No, faith.”—“What then?”—“I ran away from her.”

XXI.

“You take things coolly, sir,” said Juan. “Why,”
 Replied the other, “what can a man do?
 There still are many rainbows in your sky,
 But mine have vanish’d. All, when life is new,
 Commence with feelings warm and prospects high;
 But time strips our illusions of their hue,
 And one by one in turn, some grand mistake
 Casts off its bright skin yearly, like the snake.

XXII.

“’T is true, it gets another bright and fresh,
 Or fresher, brighter, but, the year gone through,
 This skin must go the way too of all flesh,
 Or sometimes only wear a week or two.
 Love’s the first net which spreads its deadly mesh;
 Ambition, avarice, vengeance, glory, glue
 The glittering lime-twigs of our latter days,
 Where still we flutter on for pence or praise.”

XXIII.

“All this is very fine, and may be true,”
 Said Juan; “but I really don’t see how
 It betters present times with me or you.”
 “No!” quoth the other; “yet you will allow
 By setting things in their right point of view,
 Knowledge, at least, is gain’d; for instance, now,
 We know what slavery is, and our disasters
 May teach us better to behave when masters.”

XXIV.

“Would we were masters now, if but to try
 Their present lessons on our pagan friends here,”
 Said Juan—swallowing a heart-burning sigh:
 “Heav’n help the scholar whom his fortune sends here!”
 “Perhaps we shall be one day, by and by,”
 Rejoin’d the other, “when our bad luck mends here;
 Meantime (yon old black eunuch seems to eye us)
 I wish to God that somebody would buy us!

XXV.

"But after all, what *is* our present state?
 'T is bad, and may be better—all men's lot.
 Most men are slaves, none more so than the great,
 To their own whims and passions, and what not;
 Society itself, which should create
 Kindness, destroys what little we had got:
 To feel for none is the true social art
 Of the world's stoics—men without a heart."

XXVI.

Just now a black old neutral personage
 Of the third sex stepp'd up, and peering over
 The captives, seem'd to mark their looks, and age,
 And capabilities, as to discover
 If they were fitted for the purposed cage:
 No lady e'er is ogled by a lover,
 Horse by a blackleg, broadcloth by a tailor,
 Fee by a counsel, felon by a jailor,

XXVII.

As is a slave by his intended bidder.
 'T is pleasant purchasing our fellow-creatures;
 And all are to be sold, if you consider
 Their passions, and are dext'rous; some by features
 Are bought up, others by a warlike leader,
 Some by a place—as tend their years or natures;
 The most by ready cash—but all have prices,
 From crowns to kicks, according to their vices.

XXVIII.

The eunuch having eyed them o'er with care,
 Turn'd to the merchant, and began to bid
 First but for one, and after for the pair;
 They haggled, wrangled, swore, too—so they did!
 As though they were in a mere christian fair,
 Cheapening an ox, an ass, a lamb, or kid;
 So that their bargain sounded like a battle
 For this superior yoke of human cattle.

XXIX.

At last they settled into simple grumbling,
 And pulling out reluctant purses, and
 Turning each piece of silver o'er, and tumbling
 Some down, and weighing others in their hand,
 And by mistake sequins with paras jumbling,
 Until the sum was accurately scann'd,
 And then the merchant giving change, and signing
 Receipts in full, began to think of dining.

XXX.

I wonder if his appetite was good ;
 Or if it were, if also his digestion.
 Methinks at meals some odd thoughts might intrude,
 And conscience ask a curious sort of question,
 About the right divine how far we should
 Sell flesh and blood. When dinner has oppress'd one,
 I think it is perhaps the gloomiest hour
 Which turns up out of the sad twenty-four.

XXXI.

Voltaire says, "No:" he tells you that Candide
 Found life most tolerable after meals :
 He 's wrong—unless man were a pig, indeed,
 Repletion rather adds to what he feels ;
 Unless he 's drunk, and then no doubt he 's freed
 From his own brain's oppression while it reels.
 Of food I think with Philip's son, or rather
 Ammon's (ill pleased with one world and one father) ;

XXXII.

I think with Alexander, that the act
 Of eating, with another act or two,
 Makes us feel our mortality in fact
 Redoubled ; when a roast and a ragout,
 And fish, and soup, by some side dishes back'd,
 Can give us either pain or pleasure, who
 Would pique himself on intellects, whose use
 Depends so much upon the gastric juice?

XXXIII.

The other evening ('t was on Friday last)—
 This is a fact, and no poetic fable—
 Just as my great coat was about me cast,
 My hat and gloves still lying on the table,
 I heard a shot—'t was eight o'clock scarce past—
 And running out as fast as I was able,³
 I found the military commandant
 Stretch'd in the street, and able scarce to pant.

XXXIV.

Poor fellow! for some reason, surely bad,
 They 'd slain him with five slugs ; and left him there
 To perish on the pavement : so I had
 Him borne into the house and up the stair,
 And stripp'd, and look'd to——But why should I add
 More circumstances? vain was every care ;
 The man was gone : in some Italian quarrel
 Kill'd by five bullets from an old gun-barrel.⁴

XXXV.

I gazed upon him, for I knew him well;
 And, though I have seen many corpses, never
 Saw one, whom such an accident befell,
 So calm; though pierced through stomach, heart, and liver,
 He seem'd to sleep, for you could scarcely tell
 (As he bled inwardly, no hideous river
 Of gore divulged the cause) that he was dead:—
 So as I gazed on him, I thought or said—

XXXVI.

“Can this be death? then what is life or death?
 Speak!” but he spoke not: “wake!” but still he slept:
 “But yesterday and who had mightier breath?
 A thousand varriors by his word were kept
 In awe: he said, as the centurion saith,
 ‘Go,’ and he goeth; ‘come,’ and forth he stepp’d.
 The trump and bugle till he spake were dumb—
 And now nought left him but the muffled drum.”

XXXVII.

And they who waited once and worshipp’d—they
 With their rough faces throng’d about the bed,
 To gaze once more on the commanding clay
 Which for the last, though not the first, time bled:
 And such an end! that he who many a day
 Had faced Napoleon’s foes until they fled,
 The foremost in the charge or in the sally,
 Should now be butcher’d in a civic alley!

XXVIII.

The scars of his old wounds were near his new,
 Those honourable scars which brought him fame;
 And horrid was the contrast to the view—
 But let me quit the theme, as such things claim
 Perhaps even more attention than is due
 From me: I gazed (as oft I have gazed the same)
 To try if I could wrench aught out of death,
 Which should confirm, or shake, or make a faith;

XXXIX.

But it was all a mystery. Here we are,
 And there we go:—but *where?* five bits of lead,
 Or three, or two, or one, send very far!
 And is this blood, then, form’d but to be shed?
 Can every element our elements mar?
 And air—earth—water—fire live—and we dead?
 We, whose minds comprehend all things? No more;
 But let us to the story as before.

XL.

The purchaser of Juan and acquaintance
 Bore off his bargains to a gilded boat,
 Embark'd himself and them, and off they went thence
 As fast as oars could pull and water float.
 They look'd like persons being led to sentence,
 Wondering what next, till the caique⁵ was brought
 Up in a little creek below a wall
 O'ertopp'd with cypresses dark-green and tall.

XLI.

Here their conductor tapping at the wicket
 Of a small iron door, 't was open'd, and
 He led them onward, first through a low thicket
 Flank'd by large groves which tower'd on either hand:
 They almost lost their way, and had to pick it—
 For night was closing ere they came to land.
 The eunuch made a sign to those on board,
 Who row'd off, leaving them without a word.

XLII.

As they were plodding on their winding way,
 Through orange bowers, and jasmine, and so forth
 (Of which I might have a good deal to say,
 There being no such profusion in the North
 Of oriental plants, “et cætera,”
 But that of late your scribblers think it worth
 Their while to rear whole hotbeds in *their* works,
 Because one poet travell'd 'mongst the Turks):

XLIII.

As they were threading on their way, there came
 Into Don Juan's head a thought, which he
 Whisper'd to his companion;—'t was the same
 Which might have then occur'd to you or me.
 “Methinks,” said he—“it would be no great shame
 If we should strike a stroke to set us free;
 Let's knock that old black fellow on the head,
 And march away—'t were easier done than said.”

XLIV.

“Yes,” said the other, “and when done, what then?
 How get out? how the devil got we in?
 And when we once were fairly out, and when
 From Saint Bartholomew we have saved our skin,⁶
 To-morrow 'd see us in some other den,
 And worse off than we hitherto have been;
 Besides, I'm hungry, and just now would take,
 Like Esau, for my birthright a beef-steak.

XLV.

“ We must be near some place of man’s abode ;
 For the old negro’s confidence in creeping,
 With his two captives, by so queer a road,
 Shows that he thinks his friends have not been sleeping ;
 A single cry would bring them all abroad :
 ’T is therefore better looking before leaping—
 And there, you see, this turn has brought us through.
 By Jove, a noble palace !—lighted too.”

XLVI.

It was indeed a wide extensive building
 Which open’d on their view, and o’er the front
 There seem’d to be besprent a deal of gilding
 And various hues, as is the Turkish wont,—
 A gaudy taste ; for they are little skill’d in
 The arts of which these lands were once the font :
 Each villa on the Bosphorus looks a screen
 New painted, or a pretty opera-scene.

XLVII.

And nearer as they came, a genial savour
 Of certain stews, and roast-meats, and pilaus,
 Things which in hungry mortals’ eyes find favour,
 Made Juan in his harsh intentions pause,
 And put himself upon his good behaviour :
 His friend, too, adding a new saving clause,
 Said, “ In Heaven’s name let ’s get some supper now,
 And then I ’m with you, if you ’re for a row.”

XLVIII.

Some talk of an appeal unto some passion,
 Some to men’s feelings, others to their reason :
 The last of these was never much the fashion,
 For reason thinks all reasoning out of season.
 Some speakers whine, and others lay the lash on,
 But more or less continue still to tease on,
 With arguments according to their “ forte ;”
 But no one ever dreams of being short.

XLIX.

But I digress : of all appeals,—although
 I grant the power of pathos, and of gold,
 Of beauty, flattery, threats, a shilling,—no
 Method ’s more sure at moments to take hold
 Of the best feelings of mankind, which grow
 More tender, as we every day behold,
 Than that all-softening, over-powering knell,
 The tocsin of the soul—the dinner-bell.

L.

Turkey contains no bells, and yet men dine ;
 And Juan and his friend, albeit they heard
 No christian knoll to table, saw no line
 Of lacqueys usher to the feast prepared,
 Yet smelt roast-meat, beheld a huge fire shine,
 And cooks in motion with their clean arms bared,
 And gazed around them to the left and right
 With the prophetic eye of appetite.

LI.

And giving up all notions of resistance,
 They follow'd close behind their sable guide,
 Who little thought that his own crack'd existence
 Was on the point of being set aside :
 He motion'd them to stop at some small distance,
 And knocking at the gate, 't was open'd wide,
 And a magnificent large hall display'd
 The Asian pomp of Ottoman parade.

LII.

I won't describe ; description is my "forte,"
 But every fool describes in these bright days
 His wond'rous journey to some foreign court,
 And spawns his quarto, and demands your praise—
 Death to his publisher, to him 't is sport ;
 While nature, tortured twenty thousand ways,
 Resigns herself with exemplary patience
 To guide-books, rhymes, tours, sketches, illustrations.

LIII.

Along this hall, and up and down, some squatted
 Upon their hams, were occupied at chess ;
 Others in monosyllable talk chatted,
 And some seem'd much in love with their own dress ;
 And divers smoked superb pipes decorated
 With amber mouths of greater price or less ;
 And several strutted, others slept, and some
 Prepared for supper with a glass of rum.7

LIV.

As the black eunuch enter'd with his brace
 Of purchased infidels, some raised their eyes
 A moment without slackening from their pace ;
 But those who sate ne'er stirr'd in any wise :
 One or two stared the captives in the face,
 Just as one views a horse to guess his price ;
 Some nodded to the negro from their station,
 But no one troubled him with conversation.

LV.

He leads them through the hall, and without stopping,
 On through a farther range of goodly rooms,
 Splendid but silent, save in *one*, where, dropping,⁸
 A marble fountain echoes through the glooms
 Of night, which robe the chamber, or where, popping,
 Some female head most curiously presumes
 To thrust its black eyes through the door or lattice,
 As wondering what the devil noise that is.

LVI.

Some faint lamps gleaming from the lofty walls
 Gave light enough to hint their farther way,
 But not enough to show the imperial halls
 In all the flashing of their full array.
 Perhaps there 's nothing—I 'll not say appals,
 But saddens more by night as well as day,
 Than an enormous room without a soul
 To break the lifeless splendor of the whole.

LVII.

Two or three seem so little, *one* seems nothing :
 In deserts, forests, crowds, or by the shore,
 There solitude, we know, has her full growth in
 The spots which were her realms for evermore ;
 But in a mighty hall or gallery, both in
 More modern buildings and those built of yore,
 A kind of death comes o'er us all alone,
 Seeing what 's meant for many with but one.

LVIII.

A neat snug study on a winter's night,
 A book, friend, single lady, or a glass
 Of claret, sandwich, and an appetite,
 Are things which make an English evening pass :
 Though *certes* by no means so grand a sight
 As is a theatre lit up by gas.
 I pass my evenings in long galleries solely,
 And that 's the reason I 'm so melancholy.

LIX.

Alas ! man makes that great which makes him little :
 I grant you in a church 't is very well :
 What speaks of Heaven should by no means be brittle,
 But strong and lasting, till no tongue can tell
 Their names who rear'd it ; but huge houses fit ill—
 And huge tombs worse—mankind, since Adam fell :
 Methinks the story of the tower of Babel
 Might teach them this much better than I 'm able.

LX

Babel was Nimrod's hunting-box, and then
 A town of gardens, walls, and wealth amazing,
 Where Nabuchadonosor, king of men,
 Reign'd, till one summer's day he took to grazing,
 And Daniel tamed the lions in their den,
 The people's awe and admiration raising;
 'T was famous, too, for Thisbe and for Pyramus,
 And the calumniated Queen Semiramis.

LXI.

That injured Queen, by Chroniclers so coarse
 Has been accused (I doubt not by conspiracy)
 Of an improper friendship for her horse
 (Love, like religion, sometimes runs to heresy):
 This monstrous tale had probably its source
 (For such exaggerations here and there I see)
 In writing "Courser" by mistake for "Courier;"
 I wish the case could come before a jury here."

LXII.

But to resume,—should there be (what may not
 Be in these days?) some infidels, who don't,
 Because they can't find out the very spot
 Of that same Babel, or because they won't
 (Though Claudius Rich, esquire, some bricks has got,
 And written lately two memoirs upon 't),
 Believe the Jews, those unbelievers, who
 Must be believed, though they believe not you;

LXIII.

Yet let them think that Horace has exprest
 Shortly and sweetly the masonic folly
 Of those, forgetting the great place of rest,
 Who give themselves to architecture wholly.
 We know where things and men must end at last;
 A moral (like all morals) melancholy,
 And "Et sepulchri immemor struis domos"
 Shows that we build when we should but entomb us.

LXIV.

At last they reach'd a quarter most retired,
 Where echo woke as if from a long slumber:
 Though full of all things which could be desired,
 One wonder'd what to do with such a number
 Of articles which nobody required.
 Here wealth had done its utmost to encumber
 With furniture an exquisite apartment,
 Which puzzled nature much to know what art meant.

LXV.

It seem'd, however, but to open on
 A range or suite of further chambers, which
 Might lead to Heaven knows where ; but in this one
 The moveables were prodigally rich :
 Sofas 't was half a sin to sit upon,
 So costly were they ; carpets, every stitch
 Of workmanship so rare, that made you wish
 You could glide o'er them like a golden fish.

LXVI.

The black, however, without hardly deigning
 A glance at that which rapt the slaves in wonder,
 Trampled what they scarce trod for fear of staining,
 As if the milky way their feet was under
 With all its stars ; and with a stretch attaining
 A certain press or cupboard, nixed in yonder—
 In that remote recess which you may see—
 Or if you don't the fault is not in me,—

LXVII.

I wish to be perspicuous ; and the black,
 I say, unlocking the recess, pull'd forth
 A quantity of clothes fit for the back
 Of any Mussulman, whate'er his worth ;
 And of variety there was no lack—
 And yet, though I have said there was no dearth,
 He chose himself to point out what he thought
 Most proper for the Christians he had bought.

LXVIII.

The suit he thought most suitable to each
 Was, for the elder and the stouter, first
 A Candiote cloak, which to the knee might reach,
 And trowsers not so tight that they would burst,
 But such as fit an Asiatic breech ;
 A shawl, whose folds in Cashmire had been nurst,
 Slippers of saffron, dagger rich and handy ;
 In short, all things which form a Turkish dandy.

LXIX.

While he was dressing, Baba, their black friend,
 Hinted the vast advantages which they
 Might probably attain both in the end,
 If they would but pursue the proper way
 Which fortune plainly seem'd to recommend ;
 And then he added, that he needs must say,
 “ 'T would greatly tend to better their condition,
 If they would condescend to circumcision.

LXX.

“For his own part, he really should rejoice
To see them true believers, but no less
Would leave his proposition to their choice.”

The other, thanking him for this excess
Of goodness in thus leaving them a voice
In such a trifle, scarcely could express
“Sufficiently (he said) his approbation
Of all the customs of this polish’d nation.

LXXI.

“For his own share—he saw but small objection
To so respectable an ancient rite,
And after swallowing down a slight refection,
For which he own’d a present appetite,
He doubted not a few hours of reflection
Would reconcile him to the business quite.”—

“Will it?” said Juan, sharply; “Strike me dead,
But they as soon shall circumcise my head—

LXXII.

“Cut off a thousand heads, before—” —“Now pray,”

Replied the other, “do not interrupt;
You put me out in what I had to say.

Sir!—as I said, as soon as I have supp’d,
I shall perpend if your proposal may
Be such as I can properly accept;
Provided always your great goodness still
Remits the matter to our own free will.”

LXXIII.

Baba eyed Juan, and said, “Be so good
As dress yourself—” and pointed out a suit
In which a princess with great pleasure would
Array her limbs; but Juan standing mute,
As not being in a masquerading mood,
Gave it a slight kick with his christian foot;
And when the old negro told him to “Get ready,”
Replied, “Old gentleman, I’m not a lady.”

LXXIV.

“What you may be, I neither know nor care,”
Said Baba, “but pray do as I desire;
I’ve no more time nor many words to spare.”

“At least,” said Juan, “sure I may inquire
The cause of this odd travesty?” —“Forbear,”

Said Baba, “to be curious: ’t will transpire,
No doubt, in proper place, and time, and season:
I’ve no authority to tell the reason.”

LXXV.

“ Then if I do,” said Juan, “ I ’ll be—” —“ Hold !”
 Rejoin’d the negro, “ pray be not provoking ;
 This spirit ’s well, but it may wax too bold,
 And you will find us not too fond of joking.”
 “ What, sir !” said Juan, “ shall it e’er be told
 That I unsex’d my dress ?” But Baba, stroking
 The things down, said—“ Incense me, and I call
 Those who will leave you of no sex at all.

LXXVI.

“ I offer you a handsome suit of clothes :
 A woman’s, true, but then there is a cause
 Why you should wear them.” —“ What, though my soul loathes
 The effeminate garb ?” —Thus, after a short pause,
 Sigh’d Juan, muttering also some slight oaths,
 “ What the devil shall I do with all this gauze ?”
 Thus he profanely term’d the finest lace
 Which e’er set off a marriage-morning face.

LXXVII.

And then he swore ; and, sighing, on he slipp’d
 A pair of trowsers of flesh-colour’d silk ;
 Next with a virgin zone he was equipp’d,
 Which girt a slight chemise as white as milk ;
 But, tugging on his petticoat, he tripp’d,
 Which—as we say—or as the Scotch say, *whilk*,
 (The rhyme obliges me to this ;—sometimes
 Monarchs are less imperative than rhymes)—

LXXVIII.

Whilk, which (or what you please) was owing to
 His garment’s novelty, and his being awkward ;
 And yet at last he managed to get through
 His toilet, though no doubt a little backward :
 The negro Baba help’d a little too,
 When some untoward part of raiment stuck hard ;
 And, wrestling both his arms into a gown,
 He paused, and took a survey up and down.

LXXIX.

One difficulty still remain’d,—his hair
 Was hardly long enough ; but Baba found
 So many false long tresses all to spare,
 That soon his head was most completely crown’d,
 After the manner then in fashion there ;
 And this addition with such gems was bound
 As suited the *ensemble* of his toilet,
 While Baba made him comb his head and oil it.

LXXX.

And now being femininely all array'd,
 With some small aid from scissors, paint, and tweezers,
 He look'd in almost all respects a maid,
 And Baba smilingly exclaim'd, "You see, sirs,
 A perfect transformation here display'd;
 And now, then, you must come along with me, sirs,
 That is—the lady:"—clapping his hands twice,
 Four blacks were at his elbow in a trice.

LXXXI.

"You, sir," said Baba, nodding to the one,
 "Will please to accompany those gentlemen
 To supper; but you, worthy christian nun,
 Will follow me: no trifling, sir, for when
 I say a thing, it must at once be done.
 What fear you? think you this a lion's den?
 Why, 't is a palace, where the truly wise
 Anticipate the Prophet's paradise.

LXXXII.

"You fool! I tell you no one means you harm."
 "So much the better," Juan said, "for them:
 Else they shall feel the weight of this my arm,
 Which is not quite so light as you may deem.
 I yield thus far; but soon will break the charm,
 If any take me for that which I seem;
 So that I trust, for every body's sake,
 That this disguise may lead to no mistake."

LXXXIII.

"Blockhead! come on and see," quoth Baba; while
 Don Juan, turning to his comrade, who,
 Though somewhat grieved, could scarce forbear a smile
 Upon the metamorphosis in view,
 "Farewell!" they mutually exclaim'd: "this soil
 Seems fertile in adventures strange and new;
 One's turn'd half Mussulman, and one a maid,
 By this old black enchanter's unsought aid."

LXXXIV.

"Farewell!" said Juan; "should we meet no more,
 I wish you a good appetite."—"Farewell!"
 Replied the other; "though it grieves me sore;
 When we next meet, we'll have a tale to tell:
 We needs must follow when fate puts from shore.
 Keep your good name; though Eve herself once fell."
 "Nay," quoth the maid, "the Sultan's self shan't carry me,
 Unless his highness promises to marry me."

LXXXV.

And thus they parted, each by separate doors ;
 Baba led Juan onward, room by room,
 Through glittering galleries and o'er marble floors,
 Till a gigantic portal through the gloom,
 Haughty and huge, along the distance lowers ;
 And wafted far arose a rich perfume :
 It seem'd as though they came upon a shrine,
 For all was vast, still, fragrant, and divine.

LXXXVI.

The giant door was broad, and bright, and high,
 Of gilded bronze, and carved in curious guise ;
 Warriors thereon were battling furiously ;
 Here stalks the victor, there the vanquish'd lies,
 There captives led in triumph droop the eye,
 And in perspective many a squadron flies :
 It seems the work of times before the line
 Of Rome transplanted fell with Constantine.

LXXXVII.

This massy portal stood at the wide close
 Of a huge hall, and on its either side
 Two little dwarfs, the least you could suppose,
 Were sate, like ugly imps, as if allied
 In mockery to the enormous gate which rose
 O'er them in almost pyramidic pride :
 The gate so splendid was in all its features,¹⁰
 You never thought about those little creatures,

LXXXVIII.

Until you nearly trod on them, and then,
 You started back in horror to survey
 The wondrous hideousness of those small men.
 Whose colour was not black, nor white, nor gray,
 But an extraneous mixture, which no pen
 Can trace, although perhaps the pencil may ;
 They were mis-shapen pigmies, deaf and dumb—
 Monsters, who cost a no less monstrous sum.

LXXXIX.

Their duty was—for they were strong, and though
 They look'd so little, did strong things at times—
 To ope this door, which they could really do,
 The hinges being as smooth as Rogers' rhymes ;
 And now and then, with tough strings of the bow,
 As is the custom of those eastern climes,
 To give some rebel Pacha a cravat ;
 For mutes are generally used for that.

XC.

They spoke by signs—that is, not spoke at all;
 And, looking like two incubi, they glared
 As Baba with his fingers made them fall
 To heaving back the portal folds: it scared
 Juan a moment, as this pair so small
 With shrinking serpent optics on him stared;
 It was as if their little looks could poison
 Or fascinate whome'er they fix'd their eyes on.

XCI.

Before they entered, Baba paused to hint
 To Juan some slight lessons as his guide:
 “If you could just contrive,” he said, “to stint
 That somewhat manly majesty of stride,
 'T would be as well, and (though there 's not much in 't),
 To swing a little less from side to side,
 Which has at times an aspect of the oddest;
 And also, could you look a little modest,

XCII.

“'T would be convenient; for these mutes have eyes
 Like needles, which might pierce those petticoats;
 And if they should discover your disguise,
 You know how near us the deep Bosphorus floats;
 And you and I may chance, ere morning rise,
 To find our way to Marmora without boats,
 Stitch'd up in sacks—a mode of navigation
 A good deal practised here upon occasion.”

XCIII.

With this encouragement, he led the way
 Into a room still nobler than the last;
 A rich confusion form'd a disarray
 In such sort, that the eye along it cast
 Could hardly carry any thing away,
 Object on object flash'd so bright and fast;
 A dazzling mass of gems, and gold, and glitter,
 Magnificently mingled in a litter.

XCIV.

Wealth had done wonders—taste not much; such things
 Occur in orient palaces, and even
 In the more chasten'd domes of western kings
 (Of which I 've also seen some six or seven),
 Where I can't say or gold or diamond flings
 Great lustre, there is much to be forgiven;
 Groups of bad statues, tables, chairs, and pictures,
 On which I cannot pause to make my strictures.

XCV.

In this imperial hall at distance lay
 Under a canopy, and there reclined
 Quite in a confidential queenly way,
 A lady. Baba stopp'd, and kneeling, sign'd
 To Juan, who, though not much used to pray,
 Knelt down by instinct, wondering in his mind
 What all this meant : while Baba bow'd and bended
 His head, until the ceremony ended.

XCVI.

The lady rising up with such an air
 As Venus rose with from the wave, on them
 Bent like an antelope a Paphian pair
 Of eyes, which put out each surrounding gem ;
 And raising up an arm as moonlight fair,
 She sign'd to Baba, who first kiss'd the hem
 Of her deep purple robe, and speaking low,
 Pointed to Juan, who remain'd below.

XCVII.

Her presence was as lofty as her state ;
 Her beauty of that overpowering kind,
 Whose force description only would abate :
 I'd rather leave it much to your own mind,
 Than lessen it by what I could relate
 Of forms and features ; it would strike you blind
 Could I do justice to the full detail ;
 So, luckily for both, my phrases fail.

XCVIII.

This much, however, I may add—her years
 Were ripe, they might make six-and-twenty springs,
 But there are forms which Time to touch forbears,
 And turns aside his scythe to vulgar things,
 Such as was Mary's Queen of Scots : true—tears
 And love destroy, and sapping sorrow wrings
 Charms from the charmer, yet some never grow
 Ugly ; for instance—Ninon de l'Enclos.

XCIX.

She spake some words to her attendants, who
 Composed a choir of girls, ten or a dozen,
 And were all clad alike ; like Juan, too,
 Who wore their uniform, by Baba chosen :
 They form'd a very nymph-like looking crew,
 Which might have call'd Diana's chorus "cousin,"
 As far as outward show may correspond ;
 I won't be bail for any thing beyond.

C.

They bow'd obeisance and withdrew, retiring,
 But not by the same door through which came in
 Baba and Juan, which last stood admiring,
 At some small distance, all he saw within
 This strange saloon, much fitted for inspiring;
 Marvel and praise; for both or none things win;
 And I must say I ne'er could see the very
 Great happiness of the "Nil admirari."

CI.

"Not to admire is all the art I know
 (Plain truth, dear Murray, "needs few flowers of speech")
 To make men happy, or to keep them so;"
 (So take it in the very words of Creech.)
 Thus Horace wrote, we all know, long ago;
 And thus Pope quotes the precept to re-teach
 From his translation; but had *none admired*,
 Would Pope have sung, or Horace been inspired?

CII.

Baba, when all the damsels were withdrawn,
 Motion'd to Juan to approach, and then
 A second time desired him to kneel down
 And kiss the lady's foot; which maxim when
 He heard repeated, Juan with a frown
 Drew himself up to his full height again,
 And said, "It grieved him, but he could not stoop
 To any shoe, unless it shod the Pope."

CIII.

Baba, indignant at this ill-timed pride,
 Made fierce remonstrances, and then a threat
 He mutter'd (but the last was given aside)
 About a bowstring—quite in vain; not yet
 Would Juan bend, though 't were to Mahomet's bride:
 There 's nothing in the world like *étiquette*,
 In kingly chambers or imperial halls,
 As also at the race and county balls.

CIV.

He stood like Atlas, with a world of words
 About his ears, and nathless would not bend;
 The blood of all his line's Castilian lords
 Boil'd in his veins, and rather than descend
 To stain his pedigree, a thousand swords
 A thousand times of him had made an end.
 At length, perceiving the *foot* could not stand,
 Baba proposed that he should kiss the hand.

CV.

Here was an honourable compromise,
 A half-way house of diplomatic rest,
 Where they might meet in much more peaceful guise :
 And Juan now his willingness express'd
 To use all fit and proper courtesies,
 Adding, that this was commonest and best,
 For through the South the custom still commands
 The gentleman to kiss the lady's hands.

CVI.

And he advanced, though with but a bad grace,
 Though on more *thorough-bred*¹³ or fairer fingers
 No lips e'er left their transitory trace :
 On such as these the lip too fondly lingers,
 And for one kiss would fain imprint a brace,
 As you will see, if she you love will bring hers
 In contact ; and sometimes even a fair stranger's
 An almost twelvemonth's constancy endangers.

CVII.

The lady eyed him o'er and o'er, and bade
 Baba retire, which he obey'd in style,
 As if well used to the retreating trade ;
 And taking hints in good part all the while,
 He whisper'd Juan not to be afraid,
 And, looking on him with a sort of smile,
 Took leave with such a face of satisfaction,
 As good men wear who have done a virtuous action.

CVIII.

When he was gone, there was a sudden change :
 I know not what might be the lady's thought,
 But o'er her bright brow flash'd a tumult strange,
 And into her clear cheek the blood was brought,
 Blood-red as sunset summer clouds which range
 The verge of heaven ; and in her large eyes wrought,
 A mixture of sensations might be scann'd
 Of half voluptuousness and half command,

CIX.

Her form had all the softness of her sex,
 Her features all the sweetness of the devil,
 When he put on the cherub to perplex
 Eve, and paved (God knows how) the road to evil :
 The sun himself was scarce more free from specks
 Than she from aught at which the eye could cavil ;
 Yet somehow there was something somewhere wanting,
 As if she rather *order'd* than was *granting*.

CX.

Something imperial, or imperious, threw
 A chain o'er all she did ; that is, a chain
 Was thrown as 't were about the neck of you,—
 And rapture's self will seem almost a pain
 With aught which looks like despotism in view :
 Our souls at least are free, and 't is in vain
 We would against them make the flesh obey—
 The spirit in the end will have its way.

CXI.

Her very smile was haughty, though so sweet,
 Her very nod was not an inclination ;
 There was a self-will even in her small feet,
 As though they were quite conscious of her station—
 They trod as upon necks ; and to complete
 Her state (it is the custom of her nation),
 A poniard deck'd her girdle, as the sign
 She was a sultan's bride (thank Heaven, not mine).

CXII.

“ To hear and to obey ” had been from birth
 The law of all around her ; to fulfil
 All phantasies which yielded joy or mirth,
 Had been her slaves' chief pleasure, as her will.
 Her blood was high, her beauty scarce of earth :
 Judge, then, if her caprices e'er stood still.
 Had she but been a Christian, I 've a notion
 We should have found out the “ perpetual motion.”

CXIII.

Whate'er she saw and coveted was brought ;
 Whate'er she did *not* see, if she supposed
 It might be seen, with diligence was sought,
 And when 't was found straightway the bargain closed :
 There was no end unto the things she bought,
 Nor to the trouble which her fancies caused ;
 Yet even her tyranny had such a grace,
 The women pardon'd all except her face.

CXIV.

Juan, the latest of her whims, had caught
 Her eye in passing on his way to sale ;
 She order'd him directly to be bought,
 And Baba, who had ne'er been known to fail
 In any kind of mischief to be wrought,
 At all such auctions knew how to prevail :
 She had no prudence, but he had ; and this
 Explains the garb which Juan took amiss.

CXV.

His youth and features favour'd the disguise,
 And should you ask how she, a sultan's bride,
 Could risk or compass such strange phantasies,
 This I must leave sultanas to decide :
 Emperors are only husbands in wives' eyes,
 And kings and consorts oft are mystified,
 As we may ascertain with due precision,
 Some by experience, others by tradition.

CXVI.

But to the main point, where we have been tending :—
 She now conceived all difficulties past,
 And deem'd herself extremely condescending
 When, being made her property at last,
 Without more preface, in her blue eyes blending
 Passion and power, a glance on him she cast,
 And merely saying, " Christian, canst thou love ? "
 Conceived that phrase was quite enough to move.

CXVII.

And so it was, in proper time and place ;
 But Juan, who had still his mind o'erflowing
 With Haidee's isle and soft Ionian face,
 Felt the warm blood, which in his face was glowing,
 Rush back upon his heart, which fill'd apace,
 And left his cheeks as pale as snow-drops blowing :
 These words went through his soul like Arab spears,
 So that he spoke not, but burst into tears.

CXVIII.

She was a good deal shock'd ; not shock'd at tears,
 For women shed and use them at their liking ;
 But there is something when man's eye appears
 Wet, still more disagreeable and striking :
 A woman's tear-drop melts, a man's half sears,
 Like molten lead, as if you thrust a pike in
 His heart to force it out, for (to be shorter)
 To them 't is a relief, to us a torture.

CXIX.

And she would have consoled, but knew not how ;
 Having no equals, nothing which had e'er
 Infected her with sympathy till now,
 And never having dreamt what 't was to bear
 Aught of a serious sorrowing kind, although
 There might arise some pouting petty care
 To cross her brow, she wonder'd how so near
 Her eyes another's eye could shed a tear.

CXX.

But nature teaches more than power can spoil,
 And when a *strong* although a strange sensation
 Moves—female hearts are such a genial soil
 For kinder feelings, whatsoe'er their nation,
 They naturally pour the “wine and oil,”
 Samaritans in every situation;
 And thus Gulbeyaz, though she knew not why,
 Felt an odd glistening moisture in her eye.

CXXI.

But tears must stop like all things else; and soon
 Juan, who for an instant had been moved
 To such a sorrow by the intrusive tone
 Of one who dared to ask if “he *had* loved,”
 Call'd back the stoic to his eyes, which shone
 Bright with the very weakness he reproved;
 And although sensitive to beauty, he
 Felt most indignant still at not being free.

CXXII.

Gulbeyaz, for the first time in her days,
 Was much embarrass'd, never having met
 In all her life with aught save prayers and praise;
 And as she also risk'd her life to get
 Him whom she meant to tutor in love's ways
 Into a comfortable tête-à-tête,
 To lose the hour would make her quite a martyr,
 And they had wasted now almost a quarter.

CXXIII.

I also would suggest the fitting time
 To gentlemen in any such like case,
 That is to say—in a meridian clime;
 With us there is more law given to the chase,
 But here a small delay forms a great crime:
 So recollect that the extremest grace
 Is just two minutes for your declaration—
 A moment more would hurt your reputation.

CXXIV.

Juan's was good; and might have been still better,
 But he had got Haidee into his head:
 However strange, he could not yet forget her,
 Which made him seem exceedingly ill-bred.
 Gulbeyaz, who look'd on him as her debtor
 For having had him to the palace led,
 Began to blush up to the eyes, and then
 Grow deadly pale, and then blush back again.

CXXV.

At length, in an imperial way, she laid
 Her hand on his, and bending on him eyes,
 Which needed not an empire to persuade,
 Look'd into his for love, where none replies :
 Her brow grew black, but she would not upbraid,
 That being the last thing a proud woman tries ;
 She rose, and pausing one chaste moment, threw
 Herself upon his breast, and there she grew.

CXXVI.

This was an awkward test, as Juan found,
 But he was steel'd by sorrow, wrath, and pride ;
 With gentle force her white arms he unwound,
 And seated her all drooping by his side :
 Then rising haughtily he glanced around,
 And looking coldly in her face, he cried,
 " The prison'd eagle will not pair, nor I
 Serve a sultana's sensual phantasy.

CXXVII.

" Thou ask'st if I can love ? be this the proof
 How much I *have* loved—that I love not *thee* !
 In this vile garb, the distaff, web, and woof,
 Were fitter for me : love is for the free !
 I am not dazzled by this splendid roof ;
 Whate'er thy power, and great it seems to be,
 Heads bow, knees bend, eyes watch around a throne,
 And hands obey—our hearts are still our own."

CXXVIII.

This was a truth to us extremely trite,
 Not so to her who ne'er had heard such things ;
 She deem'd her least command must yield delight,
 Earth being only made for queens and kings.
 If hearts lay on the left side or the right
 She hardly knew, to such perfection brings
 Legitimacy its born votaries, when
 Aware of their due royal rights o'er men.

CXXIX.

Besides, as has been said, she was so fair
 As even in a much humbler lot had made
 A kingdom or confusion any where ;
 And also, as may be presumed, she laid
 Some stress on charms which seldom are, if e'er,
 By the possessors thrown into the shade ;—
 She thought hers gave a double " right divine,"
 And half of that opinion's also mine.

CXXX.

Remember, or (if you cannot) imagine,
 Ye! who have kept your chastity when young,
 While some more desperate dowager has been waging
 Love with you, and been in the dog-days stung
 By your refusal, recollect her raging!
 Or recollect all that was said or sung
 On such a subject; then suppose the face
 Of a young downright beauty in this case.

CXXXI.

Suppose, but you already have supposed,
 The spouse of Potiphar, the Lady Booby,¹⁵
 Phædra, and all which story has disclosed
 Of good examples; pity that so few by
 Poets and private tutors are exposed,
 To educate—ye youth of Europe—you by!
 But when you have supposed the few we know,
 You can't suppose Gulbeyaz' angry brow.

CXXXII.

A tigress robb'd of young, a lioness,
 Or any interesting beast of prey,
 Are similes at hand for the distress
 Of ladies who cannot have their own way;
 But though my turn will not be served with less,
 These don't express one half what I should say:
 For what is stealing young ones, few or many,
 To cutting short their hopes of having any?

CXXXIII.

The love of offspring's nature's general law,
 From tigresses and cubs to ducks and ducklings;
 There's nothing whets the beak, or arms the claw,
 Like an invasion of their babes and sucklings;
 And all who have seen a human nursery, saw
 How mothers love their children's squalls and chucklings;
 This strong extreme effect (to tire no longer
 Your patience) shows the cause must still be stronger.

CXXXIV.

If I said fire flash'd from Gulbeyaz' eyes,
 'T were nothing—for her eyes flash'd always fire;
 Or said her cheeks assumed the deepest dyes,
 I should but bring disgrace upon the dyer,
 So supernatural was her passion's rise;
 For ne'er till now she knew a check'd desire:
 Even ye who know what a check'd woman is
 (Enough, God knows!) would much fall short of this.

CXXXV.

Her rage was but a minute's, and 't was well—
 A moment's more had slain her ; but the while
 It lasted 't was like a short glimpse of hell :
 Nought 's more sublime than energetic bile,
 Though horrible to see yet grand to tell,
 Like ocean warring 'gainst a rocky isle ;
 And the deep passions flashing through her form
 Made her a beautiful embodied storm.

CXXXVI.

A vulgar tempest 't were to a typhoon
 To match a common fury with her rage,
 And yet she did not want to reach the moon,¹⁴
 Like moderate Hotspur on the immortal page ;
 Her anger pitch'd into a lower tune,
 Perhaps the fault of her soft sex and age—
 Her wish was but to “kill, kill, kill,” like Lear's,
 And then her thirst of blood was quench'd in tears.

CXXXVII.

A storm it raged, and like the storm it pass'd,
 Pass'd without words—in fact she could not speak ;
 And then her sex's shame broke in at last,
 A sentiment till then in her but weak,
 But now it flow'd in natural and fast,
 As water through an unexpected leak,
 For she felt humbled—and humiliation
 Is sometimes good for people in her station.

CXXXVIII.

It teaches them that they are flesh and blood,
 It also gently hints to them that others,
 Although of clay, are not yet quite of mud ;
 That urns and pipkins are but fragile brothers,
 And works of the same pottery, bad or good,
 Though not all born of the same sires and mothers :
 It teaches—Heaven knows only what it teaches,
 But sometimes it may mend, and often reaches.

CXXXIX.

Her first thought was to cut off Juan's head ;
 Her second, to cut only his—acquaintance ;
 Her third, to ask him where he had been bred ;
 Her fourth, to rally him into repentance ;
 Her fifth, to call her maids and go to bed ;
 Her sixth, to stab herself ; her seventh, to sentence
 The lash to Baba ;—but her grand resource
 Was to sit down again, and cry of course.

CXL.

She thought to stab herself, but then she had
 The dagger close at hand, which made it awkward;
 For eastern stays are little made to pad,
 So that a poniard pierces if 't is stuck hard.
 She thought of killing Juan—but, poor lad!
 Though he deserved it well for being so backward,
 The cutting off his head was not the art
 Most likely to attain her aim—his heart.

CXLI.

Juan was moved: he had made up his mind
 To be impaled, or quarter'd as a dish
 For dogs, or to be slain with pangs refined,
 Or thrown to lions, or made baits for fish,
 And thus heroically stood resign'd,
 Rather than sin—except to his own wish;
 But all his great preparatives for dying
 Dissolved like snow before a woman crying.

CXLII.

As through his palms Bob Acres' valour oozed,¹⁵
 So Juan's virtue ebb'd, I know not how;
 And first he wonder'd why he had refused;
 And then, if matters could be made up now;
 And next his savage virtue he accused,
 Just as a friar may accuse his vow,
 Or as a dame repents her of her oath,
 Which mostly ends in some small breach of both.

CXLIII.

So he began to stammer some excuses;
 But words are not enough in such a matter,
 Although you borrow'd all that e'er the Muses
 Have sung, or even a dandy's dandiest chatter,
 Or all the figures Castlereagh abuses;
 Just as a languid smile began to flatter
 His peace was making, but before he ventured
 Farther, old Baba rather briskly enter'd.

CXLIV.

“Bride of the Sun! and Sister of the Moon!”
 ('T was thus he spake) “and Empress of the Earth!
 Whose frown would put the spheres all out of tune,
 Whose smile makes all the planets dance with mirth,
 Your slave brings tidings—he hopes not too soon—
 Which your sublime attention may be worth;
 The Sun himself has sent me like a ray,
 To hint that he is coming up this way.”

CXLV.

“Is it,” exclaim’d Gulbeyaz, “as you say?
 I wish to Heaven he would not shine till morning!
 But bid my women form the milky way.
 Hence, my old comet! give the stars due warning—
 And, Christian! mingle with them as you may;
 And, as you’d have me pardon your past scorning——”
 Here they were interrupted by a humming
 Sound, and then by a cry, “the Sultan’s coming!”

CXLVI.

First came her damsels, a decorous file,
 And then his highness’ eunuchs, black and white;
 The train might reach a quarter of a mile:
 His majesty was always so polite
 As to announce his visits a long while
 Before he came, especially at night;
 For being the last wife of the emperor,
 She was of course the favourite of the four.

CXLVII.

His highness was a man of solemn port,
 Shawl’d to the nose, and bearded to the eyes,
 Snatch’d from a prison to preside at court,
 His lately bowstrung brother caused his rise.
 He was as good a sovereign of the sort
 As any mention’d in the histories
 Of Cantemir, or Knolles, where few shine
 Save Solyman, the glory of their line.¹⁶

CXLVIII.

He went to mosque in state, and said his prayers
 With more than “oriental scrupulosity;”
 He left to his vizier all state affairs,
 And show’d but little royal curiosity:
 I know not if he had domestic cares—
 No process proved connubial animosity;
 Four wives and twice five hundred maids, unseen,
 Were ruled as calmly as a christian queen.

CXLIX.

If now and then there happen’d a slight slip,
 Little was heard of criminal or crime;
 The story scarcely pass’d a single lip—
 The sack and sea had settled all in time,
 From which the secret nobody could rip:
 The public knew no more than does this rhyme.
 No scandals made the daily press a curse—
 Morals were better, and the fish no worse.

CL.

He saw with his own eyes the moon was round,
 Was also certain that the earth was square,
 Because he had journey'd fifty miles and found
 No sign that it was circular any where.
 His empire also was without a bound :
 'T is true, a little troubled here and there,
 By rebel pachas, and encroaching giaours,
 But then they never came to the "Seven Towers;"

CLI.

Except in shape of envoys, who were sent
 To lodge there when a war broke out, according
 To the true law of nations, which ne'er meant
 Those scoundrels who have never had a sword in
 Their dirty diplomatic hands, to vent
 Their spleen in making strife, and safely wording
 Their lies, yclept despatches, without risk or
 The singeing of a single inky whisker.

CLII.

He had fifty daughters and four dozen sons,
 Of whom all such as came of age were stow'd,
 The former in a palace, where like nuns
 They lived till some bashaw was sent abroad,
 When she, whose turn it was, wedded at once,
 Sometimes at six years old—though this seems odd,
 'T is true ; the reason is, that the bashaw
 Must make a present to his sire-in-law.

CLIII.

His sons were kept in prison till they grew
 Of years to fill a bowstring or the throne,
 One or the other, but which of the two
 Could yet be known unto the fates alone ;
 Meantime the education they went through
 Was princely, as the proofs have always shown :
 So that the heir apparent still was found
 No less deserving to be hang'd than crown'd.

CLIV.

His majesty saluted his fourth spouse
 With all the ceremonies of his rank,
 Who clear'd her sparkling eyes and smooth'd her brows,
 As suits a matron who has play'd a prank :
 These must seem doubly mindful of their vows,
 To save the credit of their breaking bank ;
 To no men are such cordial greetings given
 As those whose wives have made them fit for heaven.

CLV.

His highness cast around his great black eyes,
 And looking, as he always look'd, perceived
 Juan amongst the damsels in disguise,
 At which he seem'd no whit surprised, nor grieved,
 But just remark'd with air sedate and wise,
 While still a fluttering sigh Gulbeyaz heaved,
 "I see you 've bought another girl; 't is pity
 That a mere christian should be half so pretty."

CLVI.

This compliment, which drew all eyes upon
 The new-bought virgin, made her blush and shake.
 Her comrades, also, thought themselves undone :
 Oh, Mahomet! that his majesty should take
 Such notice of a giaour, while scarce to one
 Of them his lips imperial ever spake!
 There was a general whisper, toss, and wriggle,
 But etiquette forbade them all to giggle.

CLVII.

The Turks do well to shut—at least, sometimes—
 The women up—because, in sad reality,
 Their chastity in these unhappy climes
 Is not a thing of that astringent quality,
 Which in the north prevents precarious crimes,
 And makes our snow less pure than our morality :
 The sun, which yearly melts the polar ice,
 Has quite the contrary effect on vice.

CLVIII.

Thus in the east they are extremely strict,
 And *wedlock* and a *padlock* mean the same;
 Excepting only when the former 's pick'd
 It ne'er can be replaced in proper frame;
 Spoilt, as a pipe of claret is when prick'd :
 But then their own polygamy 's to blame;
 Why don't they knead two virtuous souls for life
 Into that moral centaur, man and wife?

CLIX.

Thus far our chronicle; and now we pause,
 Though not for want of matter; but 't is time,
 According to the ancient epic laws,
 To slacken sail, and anchor with our rhyme.
 Let this fifth canto meet with due applause,
 The sixth shall have a touch of the sublime;
 Meanwhile, as Homer sometimes sleeps, perhaps
 You 'll pardon to my Muse a few short naps.

NOTES TO CANTO V.

Note 1. Stanza iii.

Ὠκεανὸς πέοιο.—This expression of Homer has been much criticised. It hardly answers to our Atlantic ideas of the ocean, but is sufficiently applicable to the Hellespont, and the Bosphorus, with the Ægean intersected with islands.

Note 2. Stanza v.

"The Giant's Grave" is a height on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, much frequented by holiday parties; like Harrow and Highgate.

Note 3. Stanza xxxiii.

The assassination alluded to took place on the eighth of December, 1820, in the streets of Ravenna, not a hundred paces from the residence of the writer. The circumstances were as described.

Note 4. Stanza xxxiv.

There was found close by him an old gun-barrel, sawn half off: it had just been discharged, and was still warm.

Note 5. Stanza xl.

The light and elegant wherries plying about the quays of Constantinople are so called.

Note 6. Stanza xlv.

St. Bartholomew is said to have been flayed alive.

Note 7. Stanza liii.

In Turkey nothing is more common than for the Mussulmans to take several glasses of strong spirits by way of appetizer. I have seen them take as many as six of raki before dinner, and swear that they dined the better for it; I tried the experiment, but fared like the Scotchman, who having heard that the birds called kittiewakes were admirable whets, ate six of them, and complained that "*he was no hungrier than when he began.*"

Note 8. Stanza lv.

A common furniture.—I recollect being received by Ali Pacha in a room containing a marble basin and fountain, &c. &c. &c. See vol. i, p. 58.

Note 9. Stanza lxi.

At the time when Lord Byron was writing this Canto, the unfortunate affair of Queen Caroline, charged, among other offences, with admitting her chamberlain, Bergami, originally a *courier*, to her bed, was occupying much attention in Italy, as in England. The allusions to the domestic troubles of George IV in the text, are frequent.—E.

Note 10. Stanza lxxxvii.

Features of a gate—a ministerial metaphor; "the *feature* upon which this question *hinges*."—See the "Fudge Family," or hear Castlereagh.

Note 11. Stanza ci.

The "Murray" of Pope was the great Earl Mansfield.—E.

Note 12. Stanza cvi.

There is perhaps nothing more distinctive of birth than the hand; it is almost the only sign of blood which aristocracy can generate.

Note 13. Stanza cxxxi.

In Fielding's novel of Joseph Andrews.

Note 14. Stanza cxxxvi.

"By heaven! methinks, it were an easy leap,
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon."—*Henry IV.*

Note 15. Stanza cxlii.

"Yes, my valour is certainly going! it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing as it were, at the palms of my hands!—*SHERIDAN'S Rivals.*

Note 16. Stanza cxlvii.

It may not be unworthy of remark, that Bacon, in his essay on "Empire," hints that *Solyman* was the *last* of his line; on what authority, I know not. These are his words:—"The destruction of Mustapha was so fatal to Solyman's line, as the succession of the Turks from Solyman, until this day, is suspected to be untrue, and of strange blood; for that Selymus the Second was thought to be supposititious." But Bacon, in his historical authorities, is often inaccurate. I could give half a dozen instances from his apophthegms only.

BACON'S APOPHTHEGMS.

OBSERVATIONS.

91.

Michael Angelo, the famous painter, painting in the pope's chapel the portraiture of hell and damned souls, made one of the damned souls so like a cardinal that was his enemy, as every body at first sight knew it; whereupon the cardinal complained to Pope Clement, humbly praying it might be defaced. The pope said to him, Why you know very well I have power to deliver a soul out of purgatory, but not out of hell.

This was *not* the portrait of a cardinal, but of the pope's master of the ceremonies.

155.

Alexander, after the battle of Granicum, had very great offers made him by Darius. Consulting with his captains concerning them, Parmenio said, Sure, I would accept of these offers, if I were as Alexander. Alexander answered, So would I, if I were as Parmenio.

It was after the battle of Issus, and during the siege of Tyre, and *not* immediately after the passage of the Granicus, that this is said to have occurred.

158.

Antigonus, when it was told him that the enemy had such volleys of arrows, that they did hide the sun, said, That falls out well, for it is hot weather, and so we shall fight in the shade.

This was *not* said by Antigonus, but by a Spartan, previously to the battle of Thermopylæ.

162.

There was a philosopher that disputed with Adrian the emperor, and did it but weakly. One of his friends, that stood by, afterwards said unto him, Methinks

This happened under Augustus Cæsar, and *not* during the reign of Adrian.

you were not like yourself last day, in argument with the emperor: I could have answered better myself. Why, said the philosopher, would you have me contend with him that commands thirty legions?

164.

There was one that found a great mass of money digged under ground in his grandfather's house, and being somewhat doubtful of the case, signified it to the emperor that he had found such treasure. The emperor made a rescript thus: Use it. He writ back again, that the sum was greater than his state or condition could use. The emperor writ a new rescript, thus: Abuse it.

178.

One of the seven was wont to say, That laws were like cobwebs; where the small flies were caught, and the great brake through.

209.

An orator of Athens said to Demosthenes, The Athenians will kill you, if they wax mad. Demosthenes replied, And they will kill you, if they be in good sense.

221.

There was a philosopher about Tiberius that looking into the nature of Caius, said of him, That he was mire mingled with blood.

97.

There was a king of Hungary took a bishop in battle, and kept him prisoner; whereupon the pope writ a monitory to him, for that he had broken the privilege of holy church and taken his son: the king sent an embassy to him, and sent withal the armour wherein the bishop was taken, and this only in writing—*Vide num hæc sit vestis filii tui?* Know now whether this be thy son's coat?

267.

Demetrius, king of Macedon, had a petition offered him divers times by an old woman, and answered he had no leisure; whereupon the woman said aloud, Why then give over to be king.

Having stated that Bacon was frequently incorrect in his citations from history, I have thought it necessary in what regards so great a name (however trifling), to support the assertion by such facts as more immediately occur to me. They are but trifles, and yet for such trifles a school-boy would be whipped (if still in the fourth

This happened to the father of Herodes Atticus, and the answer was made by the emperor *Nerva*, who deserved that his name should have been stated by the "greatest—wisest—meanest of mankind."*

This was said by Anacharsis the Scythian, and *not* by a Greek.

This was *not* said *by* Demosthenes, but *to* Demosthenes by *Phocion*.

This was not said of Caius (Caligula, I presume, is intended by Caius), but of *Tiberius* himself.

This reply was *not* made by a King of *Hungary*, but sent by Richard the first, Cœur de Lion, of England to the Pope, with the breastplate of the Bishop of Beauvais.

This did *not* happen to Demetrius, but to *Philip* King of Macedon.

* "If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shined,
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind."—POPE

form); and Voltaire for half a dozen similar errors has been treated as a superficial writer, notwithstanding the testimony of the learned Warton:—"Voltaire, a writer of *much deeper research* than is imagined, and the *first* who has displayed the literature and customs of the dark ages with *any degree of penetration* and comprehension."—*Dissertation* 1st. For another distinguished testimony to Voltaire's merits in literary research, see also Lord Holland's excellent Account of the Life and Writings of Lope de Vega, vol. i, page 215, edition of 1817.

Voltaire has even been termed "a shallow fellow," by some of the same school who called Dryden's Ode "a drunken song;"—a *school* (as it is called, I presume, from their education being still incomplete) the whole of whose filthy trash of Epics, Excursions, &c., &c., &c., is not worth the two words in Zaire, "*tu pleures*," or a single speech of Tancréd;—a *school*, the apostate lives of whose renegadoes, with their tea-drinking neutrality of morals, and their convenient treachery in politics—in the record of their accumulated pretences to virtue can produce no *actions* (were all their good deeds drawn up in array) to equal or approach the sole defence of the family of Calas, by that great and unequalled genius—the universal Voltaire.

I have ventured to remark on these little inaccuracies of "the greatest genius that England or perhaps any other country ever produced,"* merely to show our national injustice in condemning *generally* the greatest genius of France for such inadvertencies as these, of which the highest of England has been no less guilty. Query, was Bacon a greater intellect than Newton?

Being in the humour of criticism, I shall proceed, after having ventured upon the slips of Bacon, to touch upon one or two as trifling in the edition of the British Poets, by the justly-celebrated Campbell. But I do this in good-will, and trust it will be so taken. If any thing could add to my opinion of the talents and true feeling of that gentleman, it would be his classical, honest and triumphant defence of Pope, against the vulgar cant of the day, and its existing Grub-street.

The inadvertencies to which I allude are,—

Firstly, in speaking of *Anstey*, whom he accuses of having taken "his leading characters from *Smollett*." *Anstey's Bath Guide* was published in 1766. *Smollett's Humphry Clinker* (the only work of *Smollett's* from which *Tabitha*, &c., &c. could have been taken) was written during *Smollett's last residence* at Leghorn, in 1770—"Argal," if there has been any borrowing, *Anstey* must be the creditor, and not the debtor. I refer Mr. Campbell to his *own* data in his lives of *Smollett* and *Anstey*.

Secondly, Mr. Campbell says, in the life of Cowper (note to page 358, vol. vii), that "he knows not to whom Cowper alludes in these lines:

Nor he who, for the bane of thousands born,
Built God a church, and laugh'd his word to scorn.

The Calvinist meant Voltaire, and the church of Ferney, with its inscription, "Deo erexit Voltaire."

Thirdly, in the life of Burns, Mr. C. quotes Shakespeare thus,—

To gild refined gold, to paint the rose,
Or add fresh perfume to the violet.

This version by no means improves the original, which is as follows:

To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet, &c.—*King John*.

A great poet quoting another should be correct: he should also be accurate when he accuses a Parnassian brother of that dangerous charge "borrowing;" a poet had better borrow any thing (excepting money) than the thoughts of another—they are always sure to be reclaimed: but it is very hard, having been the *lender*, to be denounced as the debtor, as is the case of *Anstey versus Smollett*.

As there is "honour amongst thieves," let there be some amongst poets, and give each his due,—none can afford to give it more than Mr. Campbell himself, who, with a high reputation for originality, and a fame which cannot be shaken, is the only poet of the times (except Rogers) who can be reproached (and *in him* it is indeed a reproach) with having written *too little*.

Ravenna, January 5, 1821.

* Pope in Spence's Anecdotes, page 158, Malone's Edition.

PREFACE

TO CANTOS VI, VII, VIII.

THE details of the siege of Ismail in two of the following cantos (*i. e.* the 7th and 8th) are taken from a French work, entitled "*Histoire de la Nouvelle Russie.*" Some of the incidents attributed to Don Juan really occurred, particularly the circumstance of his saving the infant, which was the actual case of the late Duc de Richelieu, then a young volunteer in the Russian service, and afterwards the founder and benefactor of Odessa, where his name and memory can never cease to be regarded with reverence. In the course of these cantos, a stanza or two will be found relative to the late Marquis of Londonderry, but written some time before his decease. Had that person's oligarchy died with him, they would have been suppressed; as it is, I am aware of nothing in the manner of his death or of his life to prevent the free expression of the opinions of all whom his whole existence was consumed in endeavouring to enslave. That he was an amiable man in *private* life, may or may not be true; but with this the public have nothing to do; and as to lamenting his death, it will be time enough when Ireland has ceased to mourn for his birth. As a minister, I, for one of millions, looked upon him as the most despotic in intention and the weakest in intellect, that ever tyrannized over a country. It is the first time, indeed, since the Normans, that England has been insulted by a *minister* (at least) who could not speak English, and that Parliament permitted itself to be dictated to in the language of Mrs. Malaprop.

Of the manner of his death little need be said, except that if a poor radical, such as Waddington, or Watson, had cut his throat, he would have been buried in a cross-road, with the usual appurtenances of the stake and mallet. But the minister was an elegant lunatic—a sentimental suicide—he merely cut the "carotid artery" (blessings on their learning!)—and lo! the pageant and the abbey! and "the syllables of dolour yelled forth" by the newspapers—and the harangue of the coroner in an eulogy over the bleeding body of the deceased—(an Anthony worthy of such a Cæsar)—and the nauseous and atrocious cant of a degraded crew of conspirators against all that is sincere or honourable. In his death he was necessarily one of two things by the *law*—a felon or a madman—and in either case no great subject for panegyric.* In his life he was—what all the world knows, and half of

* I say by the *law* of the *land*—the laws of humanity judge more gently; but as the legitimates have always the *law* in their mouths, let them here make the most of it.

it will feel for years to come, unless his death prove a "moral lesson" to the surviving Sejani * of Europe. It may at least serve as some consolation to the nations, that their oppressors are not happy, and in some instances judge so justly of their own actions, as to anticipate the sentence of mankind.—Let us hear no more of this man, and let Ireland remove the ashes of her Grattan from the sanctuary of Westminster. Shall the patriot of humanity repose by the Werther of politics!!!

With regard to the objections which have been made on another score to the already published cantos of this poem, I shall content myself with two quotations from Voltaire:

"La pudeur s'est enfuie des cœurs, et s'est réfugiée sur les lèvres."

"Plus les mœurs sont dépravées, plus les expressions deviennent mesurées; on croit regagner en langage ce qu'on a perdu en vertu."

This is the real fact, as applicable to the degraded and hypocritical mass which leavens the present English generation, and is the only answer they deserve. The hackneyed and lavished title of blasphemer—which, with radical, liberal, jacobin, reformer, &c., are the changes which the hirelings are daily ringing in the ears of those who will listen—should be welcome to all who recollect on *whom* it was originally bestowed. Socrates and Jesus Christ were put to death publicly as *blasphemers*, and so have been and may be many who dare to oppose the most notorious abuses of the name of God and the mind of man. But persecution is not refutation, nor even triumph: the "wretched infidel," as he is called, is probably happier in his prison than the proudest of his assailants. With his opinions I have nothing to do—they may be right or wrong—but he has suffered for them, and that very suffering for conscience' sake will make more proselytes to deism than the example of heterodox † prelates to christianity, suicide statesmen to oppression, or over-pensioned homicides to the impious alliance which insults the world with the name of "Holy!" I have no wish to trample on the dishonoured or the dead; but it would be well if the adherents to the classes from whence those persons sprung should abate a little of the *cant* which is the crying sin of this double-dealing and false-speaking time of selfish spoilers, and—but enough for the present.

Pisa, July, 1822.

* From this number must be excepted Canning. Canning is a genius, almost a universal one: an orator, a wit, a poet, a statesman; and no man of talent can long pursue the path of his late predecessor, Lord C. If ever man saved his country, Canning *can*; but *will* he? I, for one, hope so.

† When Lord Sandwich said "he did not know the difference between orthodoxy and heterodoxy,"—Warburton, the bishop, replied, "Orthodoxy, my lord, is *my doxy*, and heterodoxy is *another man's doxy*."—A prelate of the present day has discovered, it seems, a *third* kind of doxy, which has not greatly exalted, in the eyes of the elect, that which Bentham calls "Church-of-Englandism."

CANTO VI.

I.

"THERE is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood"—you know the rest,^r
And most of us have found it, now and then;
At least we think so, though but few have guess'd
The moment, till too late to come again.
But no doubt every thing is for the best—
Of which the surest sign is in the end:
When things are at the worst, they sometimes mend.

II.

There is a tide in the affairs of women
"Which, taken at the flood, leads"—God knows where:
Those navigators must be able seamen
Whose charts lay down its currents to a hair;
Not all the reveries of Jacob Behmen^a
With its strange whirls and eddies can compare:—
Men, with their heads, reflect on this and that—
But women, with their hearts, on Heaven knows what!

III.

And yet a headlong, headstrong, downright she,
Young, beautiful, and daring—who would risk
A throne, the world, the universe, to be
Beloved in her own way, and rather whisk
The stars from out the sky, than not be free
As are the billows when the breeze is brisk—
Though such a she's a devil (if that there be one),
Yet she would make full many a Manichean.

IV.

Thrones, worlds, *et cætera*, are so oft upset
By commonest ambition, that when passion
O'erthrows the same, we readily forget,
Or at the least forgive, the loving rash one.
If Anthony be well remember'd yet,
'T is not his conquests keep his name in fashion;
But Actium, lost for Cleopatra's eyes,
Outbalances all Cæsar's victories.

V.

He died at fifty for a queen of forty ;
 I wish their years had been fifteen and twenty,
 For then wealth, kingdoms, worlds, are but a sport—I
 Remember when, though I had no great plenty
 Of worlds to lose, yet still, to pay my court, I
 Gave what I had—a heart : as the world went, I
 Gave what was worth a world ; for worlds could never
 Restore me those pure feelings, gone for ever.

VI.

'T was the boy's "mite," and, like the "widow's," may
 Perhaps be weigh'd hereafter, if not now ;
 But whether such things do, or do not, weigh,
 All who have loved, or love, will still allow
 Life has nought like it. God is love, they say,
 And Love 's a god, or was before the brow
 Of Earth was wrinkled by the sins and tears
 Of—but chronology best knows the years.

VII.

We left our hero and third heroine in
 A kind of state more awkward than uncommon,
 For gentlemen must sometimes risk their skin
 For that sad tempter, a forbidden woman :
 Sultans too much abhor this sort of sin,
 And don't agree at all with the wise Roman,
 Heroic, stoic Cato, the sententious,
 Who lent his lady to his friend Hortensius.

VIII.

I know Gulbeyaz was extremely wrong ;
 I own it, I deplore it, I condemn it ;
 But I detest all fiction even in song,
 And so must tell the truth, howe'er you blame it.
 Her reason being weak, her passions strong,
 She thought that her lord's heart (even could she claim it)
 Was scarce enough ; for he had fifty-nine
 Years, and a fifteen-hundredth concubine.

IX.

I am not, like Cassio, "an arithmetician,"
 But by "the bookish theoric" it appears,
 If 't is summ'd up with feminine precision,
 That, adding to the account his highness' years,
 The fair sultana err'd from inanition ;
 For, were the sultan just to all his dears,
 She could but claim the fifteen-hundredth part
 Of what should be monopoly—the heart.

X.

It is observed that ladies are litigious
 Upon all legal objects of possession,
 And not the least so when they are religious,
 Which doubles what they think of the transgression.
 With suits and prosecutions they besiege us,
 As the tribunals show through many a session,
 When they suspect that any one goes shares
 In that to which the law makes them sole heirs.

XI.

Now, if this holds good in a christian land,
 The heathens also, though with lesser latitude,
 Are apt to carry things with a high hand,
 And take what kings call "an imposing attitude ;"
 And for their rights connubial make a stand,
 When their liege husbands treat them with ingratitude ;
 And as four wives must have quadruple claims,
 The Tigris hath its jealousies like Thames.

XII.

Gulbeyaz was the fourth, and (as I said)
 The favourite ; but what 's favour amongst four ?
 Polygamy may well be held in dread,
 Not only as a sin, but as a bore :
 Most wise men, with *one* moderate woman wed,
 Will scarcely find philosophy for more ;
 And all (except Mahometans) forbear
 To make the nuptial couch a "Bed of Ware."^s

XIII.

His highness, the sublimest of mankind,—
 So styled according to the usual forms
 Of every monarch, till they are consign'd
 To those sad hungry jacobins, the worms,
 Who on the very loftiest kings have dined,—
 His highness gazed upon Gulbeyaz' charms,
 Expecting all the welcome of a lover
 (A "Highland welcome" all the wide world over).

XIV.

Now here we should distinguish ; for howe'er
 Kisses, sweet words, embraces, and all that,
 May look like what is—neither here nor there ;
 They are put on as easily as a hat,
 Or rather bonnet, which the fair sex wear,
 Trimm'd either heads or hearts to decorate,
 Which form an ornament, but no more part
 Of heads than their caresses of the heart.

XV.

A slight blush, a soft tremor, a calm kind
 Of gentle feminine delight, and shown
 More in the eyelids than the eyes, resign'd
 Rather to hide what pleases most unknown,
 Are the best tokens (to a modest mind)
 Of love, when seated on his loveliest throne,
 A sincere woman's breast,—for over-*warm*
 Or over-*cold* annihilates the charm.

XVI.

For over-warmth, if false, is worse than truth ;
 If true, 't is no great lease of its own fire ;
 For no one, save in very early youth,
 Would like (I think) to trust all to desire,
 Which is but a precarious bond, in sooth,
 And apt to be transferr'd to the first buyer
 At a sad discount : while your over chilly
 Women, on t' other hand, seem somewhat silly.

XVII.

That is, we cannot pardon their bad taste ;
 For so it seems to lovers swift or slow,
 Who fain would have a mutual flame confess'd,
 And see a sentimental passion glow,
 Even were St. Francis' paramour their guest,
 In his monastic concubine of snow ;—⁴
 In short, the maxim for the amorous tribe is
 Horatian, "Medio tu tutissimus ibis."

XVIII.

The "tu" 's *too* much,—but let it stand—the verse
 Requires it, that 's to say, the English rhyme,
 And not the pink of old hexameters ;
 But, after all, there 's neither tune nor time
 In the last line, which cannot well be worse,
 And was thrust in to close the octave's chime :
 I own no prosody can ever rate it
 As a rule, but *truth* may, if you translate it.

XIX.

If fair Gulbeyaz overdid her part,
 I know not—it succeeded, and success
 Is much in most things, not less in the heart
 Than other articles of female dress.
 Self-love in man too beats all female art ;
 They lie, we lie, all lie, but love no less :
 And no one virtue yet, except starvation,
 Could stop that worst of vices—propagation.

XX.

We leave this royal couple to repose,
 A bed is not a throne, and they may sleep,
 Whate'er their dreams be, if of joys or woes;
 Yet disappointed joys are woes as deep
 As any man's clay mixture undergoes.
 Our least of sorrows are such as we weep;
 'T is the vile daily drop on drop which wears
 The soul out (like the stone) with petty cares.

XXI.

A scolding wife, a sullen son, a bill
 To pay, unpaid, protested or discounted
 At a per-centage; a child cross, dog ill,
 A favourite horse fallen lame just as he's mounted;
 A bad old woman making a worse will,
 Which leaves you minus of the cash you counted
 As certain;—these are paltry things, and yet
 I've rarely seen the man they did not fret.

XXII.

I'm a philosopher; confound them all!
 Bills, beasts, and men, and—no! *not* womankind!
 With one good hearty curse I vent my gall,
 And then my stoicism leaves nought behind
 Which it can either pain or evil call,
 And I can give my whole soul up to mind;
 Though what is soul or mind, their birth or growth,
 Is more than I know—the deuce take them both!

XXIII.

So now all things are d—n'd, one feels at ease,
 As after reading Athanasius' curse,
 Which doth your true believer so much please:
 I doubt if any now could make it worse
 O'er his worst enemy when at his knees,
 'T is so sententious, positive, and terse,
 And decorates the book of Common Prayer,
 As doth a rainbow the just clearing air.

XXIV.

Gulbeyaz and her lord were sleeping, or
 At least one of them—Oh the heavy night!
 When wicked wives who love some bachelor,
 Lie down in dudgeon to sigh for the light
 Of the gray morning, and look vainly for
 Its twinkle through the lattice dusky quite,
 To toss, to tumble, doze, revive, and quake
 Lest their too lawful bed-fellow should wake.

XXV.

These are beneath the canopy of heaven,
 Also beneath the canopy of beds
 Four-posted and silk-curtain'd, which are given
 For rich men and their brides to lay their heads
 Upon, in sheets white as what bards call "driven
 Snow."⁵ Well! 't is all hap-hazard when one weds.
 Gulbeyaz was an empress, but had been
 Perhaps as wretched if a *peasant's quean*.

XXVI.

Don Juan in his feminine disguise,
 With all the damsels in their long array,
 Had bow'd themselves before the imperial eyes
 And, at the usual signal, ta'en their way
 Back to their chambers, those long galleries
 In the seraglio, where the ladies lay
 Their delicate limbs; a thousand bosoms there
 Beating for love, as the caged bird's for air.

XXVII.

I love the sex, and sometimes would reverse
 The tyrant's wish, "that mankind only had
 One neck, which he with one fell stroke might pierce:"⁶
 My wish is quite as wide, but not so bad,
 And much more tender on the whole than fierce:
 It being (not *now*, but only while a lad)
 That womankind had but one rosy mouth
 To kiss them all at once from north to south.

XXVIII.

Oh enviable Briareus! with thy hands
 And heads, if thou hadst all things multiplied
 In such proportion!—But my Muse withstands
 The giant thought of being a Titan's bride,
 Or travelling in Patagonian lands;
 So let us back to Lilliput, and guide
 Our hero through the labyrinth of love
 In which we left him several lines above.

XXIX.

He went forth with the lovely odalisques,
 At the given signal join'd to their array;
 And though he certainly ran many risks,
 Yet he could not at times keep by the way,
 (Although the consequences of such frisks
 Are worse than the worst damages men pay
 In moral England, where the thing 's a tax)
 From ogling all their charms from breasts to backs.

XXX

Still he forgot not his disguise :—along
 The galleries from room to room they walk'd,
 A virgin-like and edifying throng,
 By eunuchs flank'd ; while at their head there stalk'd
 A dame who kept up discipline among
 The female ranks, so that none stirr'd or talk'd
 Without her sanction on their she-parades :
 Her title was “the Mother of the Maids.”

XXXI.

Whether she was a “mother,” I know not,
 Or whether they were “maids” who call'd her mother ;
 But this is her seraglio title, got
 I know not how, but good as any other ;
 So Cantemir can tell you, or De Tott :
 Her office was to keep aloof or smother
 All bad propensities in fifteen hundred
 Young women, and correct them when they blunder'd.

XXXII.

A goodly sinecure, no doubt ! but made
 More easy by the absence of all men
 Except his Majesty, who, with her aid,
 And guards, and bolts, and walls, and now and then
 A slight example, just to cast a shade
 Along the rest, contrived to keep this den
 Of beauties cool as an Italian convent,
 Where all the passions have, alas ! but one vent.

XXXIII.

And what is that ? Devotion, doubtless—how
 Could you ask such a question ?—but we will
 Continue. As I said, this goodly row
 Of ladies of all countries at the will
 Of one good man, with stately march and slow,
 Like water-lilies floating down a rill,
 Or rather lake—for *rills* do *not* run *slowly*,—
 Paced on most maiden-like and melancholy.

XXXIV.

But when they reach'd their own apartments, there,
 Like birds, or boys, or bedlamites broke loose,
 Waves at spring-tide, or women any where
 When freed from bonds (which are of no great use
 After all), or like Irish at a fair,
 Their guards being gone, and, as it were, a truce
 Establish'd between them and bondage, they
 Began to sing, dance, chatter, smile, and play.

XXXV.

Their talk, of course, ran most on the new comer,
 Her shape, her hair, her air, her every thing :
 Some thought her dress did not so much become her,
 Or wonder'd at her ears without a ring ;
 Some said her years were getting nigh their summer,
 Others contended they were but in spring ;
 Some thought her rather masculine in height,
 While others wish'd that she had been so quite.

XXXVI.

But no one doubted, on the whole, that she
 Was what her dress bespoke, a damsel fair,
 And fresh, and "beautiful exceedingly,"
 Who with the brightest Georgians might compare :
 They wonder'd how Gulbeyaz too could be
 So silly as to buy slaves who might share
 (If that his highness wearied of his bride)
 Her throne and power, and every thing beside.

XXXVII.

But what was strangest in this virgin crew,
 Although her beauty was enough to vex,
 After the first investigating view,
 They all found out as few, or fewer, specks,
 In the fair form of their companion new,
 Than is the custom of the gentle sex,
 When they survey, with christian eyes or heathen,
 In a new face "the ugliest creature breathing."

XXXVIII.

And yet they had their little jealousies,
 Like all the rest ; but upon this occasion,
 Whether there are such things as sympathies
 Without our knowledge or our approbation,
 Although they could not see through his disguise,
 All felt a soft kind of concatenation,
 Like magnetism, or devilism, or what
 You please—we will not quarrel about that :

XXXIX.

But certain 't is they all felt for their new
 Companion something newer still, as 't were
 A sentimental friendship through and through,
 Extremely pure which made them all concur
 In wishing her their sister, save a few
 Who wish'd they had a brother just like her,
 Whom, if they were at home in sweet Circassia,
 They would prefer to Padisha or Pacha.⁷

XL.

Of those who had most genius for this sort
 Of sentimental friendship, there were three,
 Lolah, Katinka and Dudù;—in short
 (To save description), fair as fair can be
 Were they, according to the best report,
 Though differing in stature and degree,
 And clime and time, and country and complexion;
 They all alike admired their new connexion.

XLI.

Lolah was dusk as India, and as warm;
 Katinka was a Georgian, white and red,
 With great blue eyes, a lovely hand and arm,
 And feet so small they scarce seem'd made to tread,
 But rather skim the earth; while Dudù's form
 Look'd more adapted to be put to bed,
 Being somewhat large and languishing and lazy,
 Yet of a beauty that would drive you crazy.

XLII.

A kind of sleepy Venus seem'd Dudù,
 Yet very fit to "murder sleep" in those
 Who gazed upon her cheek's transcendent hue,
 Her Attic forehead, and her Phidian nose:
 Few angles were there in her form, 't is true,
 Thinner she might have been, and yet scarce lose;
 Yet, after all, 't would puzzle to say where
 It would not spoil some separate charm *to pare*.

XLIII.

She was not violently lively, but
 Stole on your spirit like a May-day breaking;
 Her eyes were not too sparkling, yet, half shut,
 They put beholders in a tender taking:
 She look'd (this simile 's quite new) just cut
 From marble, like Pygmalion's statue waking,
 The mortal and the marble still at strife,
 And timidly expanding into life.

XLIV.

Lolah demanded the new damsel's name—
 "Juanna."—Well, a pretty name enough.
 Katinka ask'd her also whence she came—
 "From Spain."—"But where *is* Spain?"—"Don't ask such stuff,
 Nor show your Georgian ignorance—for shame!"
 Said Lolah, with an accent rather rough
 To poor Katinka: "Spain 's an island near
 Morocco, betwixt Egypt and Tangier."

XLV.

Dudù said nothing, but sat down beside
 Juanna, playing with her veil or hair ;
 And, looking at her steadfastly, she sigh'd,
 As if she pitied her for being there—
 A pretty stranger, without friend or guide,
 And all abash'd too at the general stare
 Which welcomes hapless strangers in all places,
 With kind remarks upon their mien and faces.

XLVI.

But here the Mother of the Maids drew near,
 With "Ladies, it is time to go to rest.
 I'm puzzled what to do with you, my dear,"
 She added to Juanna, their new guest :
 "Your coming has been unexpected here,
 And every couch is occupied; you had best
 Partake of mine: but by to-morrow early
 We will have all things settled for you fairly."

XLVII.

Here Lolah interposed—"Mamma, you know
 You don't sleep soundly, and I cannot bear
 That any body should disturb you so ;
 I'll take Juanna; we're a slenderer pair
 Than you would make the half of;—don't say no,
 And I of your young charge will take due care."
 But here Katinka interfered and said,
 She also had "compassion and a bed."

XLVIII.

"Besides, I hate to sleep alone," quoth she.
 The matron frown'd: "Why so?"—"For fear of ghosts,"
 Replied Katinka; "I am sure I see
 A phantom upon each of the four posts:
 And then I have the worst dreams that can be,
 Of Guebres, Giaours, and Ginns, and Gouls in hosts."
 The dame replied, "Between your dreams and you,
 I fear Juanna's dreams would be but few."

XLIX.

"You, Lolah, must continue still to lie
 Alone, for reasons which don't matter; you
 The same, Katinka, until by and by;
 And I shall place Juanna with Dudù,
 Who's quiet, inoffensive, silent, shy,
 And will not toss and chatter the night through.
 What say you, child?"—Dudù said nothing, as
 Her talents were of the more silent class;

L.

But she rose up, and kiss'd the matron's brow
 Between the eyes, and Lolah on both cheeks,
 Katinka too ; and with a gentle bow
 (Curtseys are neither used by Turks nor Greeks),
 She took Juanna by the hand to show
 Their place of rest, and left to both their piques,
 The others pouting at the matron's preference
 Of Dudù, though they held their tongues from deference.

LI.

It was a spacious chamber (Oda is
 The Turkish title), and ranged round the wall
 Were couches, toilets—and much more than this
 I might describe, as I have seen it all,
 But it suffices—little was amiss ;
 'T was on the whole a nobly furnish'd hall,
 With all things ladies want, save one or two,
 And even those were nearer than they knew.

LII.

Dudù, as has been said, was a sweet creature,
 Not very dashing, but extremely winning,
 With the most regulated charms of feature,
 Which painters cannot catch like faces sinning
 Against proportion—the wild strokes of nature
 Which they hit off at once in the beginning,
 Full of expression, right or wrong, that strike,
 And, pleasing or displeasing, still are like.

LIII.

But she was a soft landscape of mild earth,
 Where all was harmony and calm, and quiet,
 Luxuriant, budding ; cheerful without mirth,
 Which, if not happiness, is much more nigh it
 Than are your mighty passions and so forth,
 Which some call “ the sublime :” I wish they 'd try it :
 I 've seen your stormy seas and stormy women,
 And pity lovers rather more than seamen.

LIV.

But she was pensive more than melancholy,
 And serious more than pensive, and serene,
 It may be, more than either—not unholy
 Her thoughts, at least till now, appear to have been.
 The strangest thing was, beauteous, she was wholly
 Unconscious, albeit turn'd of quick seventeen,
 That she was fair, or dark, or short, or tall ;
 She never thought about herself at all.

LV.

And therefore was she kind and gentle as
 The age of gold (when gold was yet unknown,
 By which its nomenclature came to pass;
 Thus most appropriately has been shown
 "Lucus a *non* lucendo," *not* what *was*,
 But what *was not*; a sort of style that's grown
 Extremely common in this age, whose metal
 The devil may decompose, but never settle:

LVI.

I think it may be of "Corinthian brass,"
 Which was a mixture of all metals, but
 The brazen uppermost). Kind reader! pass
 This long parenthesis: I could not shut
 It sooner for the soul of me, and class
 My faults even with your own! which meaneth, put
 A kind construction upon them and me;
 But *that* you won't—then don't—I am not less free.

LVII.

'T is time we should return to plain narration,
 And thus my narrative proceeds:—Dudù,
 With every kindness short of ostentation,
 Show'd Juan, or Juanna, through and through
 This labyrinth of females, and each station
 Described—what's strange—in words extremely few:
 I have but one simile, and that's a blunder,
 For wordless woman, which is *silent* thunder.

LVIII.

And next she gave her (I say *her*, because
 The gender still was epicene, at least
 In outward show, which is a saving clause)
 An outline of the customs of the east,
 With all their chaste integrity of laws,
 By which the more a haram is increased,
 The stricter doubtless grow the vestal duties
 Of any supernumerary beauties.

LIX.

And then she gave Juanna a chaste kiss:
 Dudù was fond of kissing—which I'm sure
 That nobody can ever take amiss,
 Because 't is pleasant, so that it be pure,
 And between females means no more than this—
 That they have nothing better near, or newer.
 "Kiss" rhymes to "bliss" in fact as well as verse—
 I wish it never led to something worse.

LX.

In perfect innocence she then unmade
 Her toilet, which cost little, for she was
 A child of nature, carelessly array'd ;
 If fond of a chance ogle at her glass,
 'T was like the fawn which, in the lake display'd,
 Beholds her own shy shadowy image pass,
 When first she starts, and then returns to peep,
 Admiring this new native of the deep.

LXI.

And one by one her articles of dress
 Were laid aside ; but not before she offer'd
 Her aid to fair Juanna, whose excess
 Of modesty declined the assistance proffer'd,—
 Which pass'd well off—as she could do no less :
 Though by this politesse she rather suffer'd,
 Pricking her fingers with those cursed pins,
 Which surely were invented for our sins,—

LXII.

Making a woman like a porcupine,
 Not to be rashly touch'd. But still more dread,
 Oh ye ! whose fate it is, as once 't was mine,
 In early youth, to turn a lady's maid ;
 I did my very boyish best to shine
 In tricking her out for a masquerade :
 The pins were placed sufficiently, but not
 Stuck all exactly in the proper spot.

LXIII.

But these are foolish things to all the wise—
 And I love Wisdom more than she loves me ;
 My tendency is to philosophize
 On most things, from a tyrant to a tree ;
 But still the spouseless virgin *Knowledge* flies.
 What are we ? and whence came we ? what shall be
 Our *ultimate* existence ? what 's our present ?
 Are questions answerless, and yet incessant.

LXIV.

There was deep silence in the chamber : dim
 And distant from each other burn'd the lights,
 And slumber hover'd o'er each lovely limb
 Of the fair occupants : if there be sprites,
 They should have walk'd there in their sprightliest trim,
 By way of change from their sepulchral sites,
 And shown themselves as ghosts of better taste
 Than haunting some old ruin or wild waste

LXV.

Many and beautiful lay those around,
 Like flowers of different hue, and clime, and root,
 In some exotic garden sometimes found,
 With cost, and care, and warmth induced to shoot.
 One, with her auburn tresses lightly bound,
 And fair brows gently drooping, as the fruit
 Nods from the tree, was slumbering with soft breath
 And lips apart, which show'd the pearls beneath.

LXVI.

One, with her flush'd cheek laid on her white arm,
 And raven ringlets gather'd in dark crowd
 Above her brow, lay dreaming soft and warm;
 And smiling through her dream, as through a cloud
 The moon breaks, half unveil'd each further charm,
 As, slightly stirring in her snowy shroud,
 Her beauties seized the unconscious hour of night
 All bashfully to struggle into light.

LXVII.

This is no bull, although it sounds so; for
 'T was night, but there were lamps, as hath been said.
 A third's all-pallid aspect offer'd more
 The traits of sleeping sorrow, and betray'd
 Through the heaved breast the dream of some far shore
 Beloved and deplored; while slowly stray'd
 (As night-dew, on a cypress glittering, tinges
 The black bough) tear-drops through her eyes' dark fringes.

LXVIII.

A fourth, as marble, statue-like and still,
 Lay in a breathless, hush'd, and stony sleep;
 White, cold, and pure, as looks a frozen rill,
 Or the snow minaret on an Alpine steep,
 Or Lot's wife done in salt,—or what you will;—
 My similes are gather'd in a heap,
 So pick and chuse—perhaps you 'll be content
 With a carved lady on a monument.

LXIX.

And lo! a fifth appears;—and what is she?
 A lady of “a certain age,” which means
 Certainly aged—what her years might be
 I know not, never counting past their teens;
 But there she slept, not quite so fair to see
 As ere that awful period intervenes,
 Which lays both men and women on the shelf,
 To meditate upon their sins and self.

LXX.

But all this time how'slept, or dream'd, Dudù?
 With strict inquiry I could ne'er discover,
 And scorn to add a syllable untrue;
 But ere the middle watch was hardly over,
 Just when the fading lamps waned dim and blue,
 And phantoms hover'd, or might seem to hover,
 To those who like their company, about
 The apartment, on a sudden she scream'd out:

LXXI.

And that so loudly, that up started all
 The Oda, in a general commotion:
 Matron and maids, and those whom you may call
 Neither, came crowding like the waves of ocean,
 One on the other, throughout the whole hall;
 All trembling, wondering, without the least notion,
 More than I have myself, of what could make
 The calm Dudù so turbulently wake.

LXXII.

But wide awake she was, and round her bed,
 With floating draperies and with flying hair,
 With eager eyes, and light but hurried tread,
 And bosoms, arms, and ancles glancing bare,
 And bright as any meteor ever bred
 By the north pole,—they sought her cause of care,
 For she seem'd agitated, flush'd, and frighten'd,
 Her eye dilated and her colour heighten'd.

LXXIII.

But what is strange—and a strong proof how great
 A blessing is sound sleep, Juanna lay
 As fast as ever husband by his mate
 In holy matrimony snores away.
 Not all the clamour broke her happy state
 Of slumber, ere they shook her,—so they say
 At least,—and then she too unclosed her eyes,
 And yawn'd a good deal with discreet surprise.

LXXIV.

And now commenced a strict investigation,
 Which, as all spoke at once, and more than once,
 Conjecturing, wondering, asking a narration,
 Alike might puzzle either wit or dunce
 To answer in a very clear oration.
 Dudù had never pass'd for wanting sense,
 But, being “no orator, as Brutus is,”
 Could not at first expound what was amiss.

LXXV.

At length she said, that, in a slumber sound,
 She dream'd a dream of walking in a wood—
 A "wood obscure," like that where Dante found⁸
 Himself in at the age when all grow good;
 Life's half-way house, where dames with virtue crown'd
 Run much less risk of lovers turning rude;—
 And that this wood was full of pleasant fruits,
 And trees of goodly growth and spreading roots;

LXXVI.

And in the midst a golden apple grew,—
 A most prodigious pippin—but it hung
 Rather too high and distant; that she threw
 Her glances on it, and then, longing, flung
 Stones, and whatever she could pick up, to
 Bring down the fruit, which still perversely clung
 To its own bough, and dangled yet in sight,
 But always at a most provoking height;

LXXVII.

That on a sudden, when she least had hope,
 It fell down of its own accord, before
 Her feet; that her first movement was to stoop
 And pick it up, and bite it to the core;
 That just as her young lip began to ope
 Upon the golden fruit the vision bore,
 A bee flew out and stung her to the heart,
 And so—she awoke with a great scream and start.

LXXVIII.

All this she told with some confusion and
 Dismay, the usual consequence of dreams
 Of the unpleasant kind, with none at hand
 To expound their vain and visionary gleams.
 I've known some odd ones which seem'd really plann'd
 Prophetically, or that which one deems
 "A strange coincidence," to use a phrase
 By which such things are settled now-a days.⁹

LXXIX.

The damsels, who had thoughts of some great harm,
 Began, as is the consequence of fear,
 To scold a little at the false alarm
 That broke for nothing on their sleeping ear.
 The matron too was wroth to leave her warm
 Bed for the dream she 'd been obliged to hear,
 And chafed at poor Dudù, who only sigh'd,
 And said that she was sorry she had cried.

LXXX.

"I've heard of stories of a cock and bull;
 But visions of an apple and a bee,
 To take us from our natural rest, and pull
 The whole Oda from their beds at half-past three,
 Would make us think the moon is at its full.
 You surely are unwell, child! we must see,
 To-morrow, what his highness's physician
 Will say to this hysteric of a vision."

LXXXI.

"And poor Juanna too! the child's first night
 Within these walls, to be broke in upon
 With such a clamour—I had thought it right
 That the young stranger should not lie alone,
 And, as the quietest of all, she might
 With you, Dudù, a good night's rest have known:
 But now I must transfer her to the charge
 Of Lolah—though her couch is not so large."

LXXXII.

Lolah's eyes sparkled at the proposition;
 But poor Dudù, with large drops in her own,
 Resulting from the scolding or the vision,
 Implored that present pardon might be shown
 For this first fault, and that on no condition
 (She added in a soft and piteous tone)
 Juanna should be taken from her, and
 Her future dreams should all be kept in hand.

LXXXIII.

She promised never more to have a dream,
 At least to dream so loudly as just now;
 She wonder'd at herself how she could scream—
 'T was foolish, nervous, as she must allow,
 A fond hallucination, and a theme
 For laughter—but she felt her spirits low,
 And begg'd they would excuse her; she'd get over
 This weakness in a few hours, and recover.

LXXXIV.

And here Juanna kindly interposed,
 And said she felt herself extremely well
 Where she then was, as her sound sleep disclosed
 When all around rang like a tocsin-bell:
 She did not find herself the least disposed
 To quit her gentle partner, and to dwell
 Apart from one who had no sin to show,
 Save that of dreaming once "mal-à-propos."

LXXXV.

As thus Juanna spoke, Dudù turn'd round,
 And hid her face within Juanna's breast;
 Her neck alone was seen, but that was found
 The colour of a budding rose's crest.
 I can't tell why she blush'd, nor can expound
 The mystery of this rupture of their rest;
 All that I know is, that the facts I state
 Are true as truth has ever been of late.

LXXXVI.

And so good night to them,—or, if you will,
 Good morrow—for the cock had crown, and light
 Began to clothe each Asiatic hill,
 And the mosque crescent struggled into sight
 Of the long caravan, which in the chill
 Of dewy dawn wound slowly round each height
 That stretches to the stony belt which girds
 Asia, where Kaff looks down upon the Kurds.

LXXXVII.

With the first ray, or rather gray of morn,
 Gulbeyaz rose from restlessness; and pale
 As passion rises, with its bosom worn,
 Array'd herself with mantle, gem, and veil:
 The nightingale that sings with the deep thorn,
 Which fable places in her breast of wail,
 Is lighter far of heart and voice than those
 Whose headlong passions form their proper woes.

LXXXVIII.

And that 's the moral of this composition,
 If people would but see its real drift;—
 But *that* they will not do without suspicion,
 Because all gentle readers have the gift
 Of closing 'gainst the light their orbs of vision;
 While gentle writers also love to lift
 Their voices 'gainst each other, which is natural—
 The numbers are too great for them to flatter all.

LXXXIX.

Rose the sultana from a bed of splendour,—
 Softer than the soft Sybarite's, who cried
 Aloud because his feelings were too tender
 To brook a ruffled rose-leaf by his side,—
 So beautiful that art could little mend her,
 Though pale with conflicts between love and pride:—
 So agitated was she with her error,
 She did not even look into the mirror.

XC.

Also arose about the self-same time,
 Perhaps a little later, her great lord,
 Master of thirty kingdoms so sublime,
 And of a wife by whom he was abhorr'd,
 A thing of much less import in that clime—
 At least to those of incomes which afford
 The filling up their whole connubial cargo—
 Than where two wives are under an embargo.

XCI.

He did not think much on the matter, nor
 Indeed on any other: as a man,
 He liked to have a handsome paramour
 At hand, as one may like to have a fan,
 And therefore of Circassians had good store,
 As an amusement after the divan;
 Though an unusual fit of love, or duty,
 Had made him lately bask in his bride's beauty.

XCII.

And now he rose; and after due ablutions,
 Exacted by the customs of the east,
 And prayers and other pious evolutions,
 He drank six cups of coffee at the least,
 And then withdrew to hear about the Russians,
 Whose victories had recently increased
 In Catherine's reign, whom glory still adores,
 As greatest of all sovereigns and w—s.

XCIII.

But oh, thou grand legitimate Alexander!
 Her son's son, let not this last phrase offend
 Thine ear, if it should reach,—and now rhymes wander
 Almost as far as Petersburg, and lend
 A dreadful impulse to each loud meander
 Of murmuring liberty's wide waves, which blend
 Their roar even with the Baltic's,—so you be
 Your father's son, 't is quite enough for me.

XCIV.

To call men love-begotten, or proclaim
 Their mothers as the antipodes of Timon,
 That hater of mankind, would be a shame,
 A libel, or whate'er you please to rhyme on:
 But people's ancestors are history's game;
 And if one lady's slip could leave a crime on
 All generations, I should like to know
 What pedigree the best would have to show?

XCV.

Had Catherine and the sultan understood
 Their own true interests, which kings rarely know,
 Until 't is taught by lessons rather rude,
 There was a way to end their strife, although
 Perhaps precarious, had they but thought good,
 Without the aid of prince or plenipo:
 She to dismiss her guards, and he his haram,
 And for their other matters, meet and share 'em.

XCVI.

But as it was, his highness had to hold
 His daily council upon ways and means
 How to encounter with this martial scold,
 This modern Amazon and queen of queans;
 And the perplexity could not be told
 Of all the pillars of the state, which leans
 Sometimes a little heavy on the backs
 Of those who cannot lay on a new tax.

XCVII.

Meantime Gulbeyaz, when her king was gone,
 Retired into her boudoir, a sweet place
 For love or breakfast; private, pleasing, lone,
 And rich with all contrivances which grace
 Those gay recesses:—many a precious stone
 Sparkled along its roof, and many a vase
 Of porcelain held in the fetter'd flowers,
 Those captive soothers of a captive's hours.

XCVIII.

Mother of pearl, and porphyry, and marble,
 Vied with each other on this costly spot;
 And singing birds without were heard to warble;
 And the stain'd glass which lighted this fair grot
 Varied each ray;—but all descriptions garble
 The true effect, and so we had better not
 Be too minute; an outline is the best,—
 A lively reader's fancy does the rest.

XCIX.

And here she summon'd Baba, and required
 Don Juan at his hands, and information
 Of what had past since all the slaves retired,
 And whether he had occupied their station;
 If matters had been managed as desired,
 And his disguise with due consideration
 Kept up; and, above all, the where and how
 He had pass'd the night, was what she wish'd to know.

C.

Baba, with some embarrassment, replied
 To this long catechism of questions ask'd
 More easily than answer'd,—that he had tried
 His best to obey in what he had been task'd;
 But there seem'd something that he wish'd to hide,
Which hesitation more betray'd than mask'd;
 He scratch'd his ear, the infallible resource
 To which embarrass'd people have recourse.

CI.

Gulbeyaz was no model of true patience,
 Nor much disposed to wait in word or deed;
 She liked quick answers in all conversations;
 And when she saw him stumbling like a steed
 In his replies, she puzzled him for fresh ones;
 And as his speech grew still more broken-knee'd,
 Her cheek began to flush, her eyes to sparkle,
 And her proud brow's blue veins to swell and darkle.

CII.

When Baba saw these symptoms, which he knew
 To bode him no great good, he deprecated
 Her anger, and beseech'd she 'd hear him through—
 He could not help the thing which he related:
 Then out it came at length that to Dudù
 Juan was given in charge, as hath been stated;
 But not by Baba's fault, he said, and swore on
 The holy camel's hump, besides the koran.

CIII.

The chief dame of the Oda, upon whom
 The discipline of the whole haram bore,
 As soon as they re-enter'd their own room,
 For Baba's function stopp'd short at the door,
 Had settled all; nor could he then presume
 (The aforesaid Baba) just then to do more,
 Without exciting such suspicion as
 Might make the matter still worse than it was.

CIV.

He hoped, indeed he thought he could be sure,
 Juan had not betray'd himself; in fact
 'T was certain that his conduct had been pure,
 Because a foolish or imprudent act
 Would not alone have made him insecure,
 But ended in his being found out and sack'd,
 And thrown into the sea.—Thus Baba spoke
 Of all save Dudù's dream, which was no joke.

CV.

This he discreetly kept in the back-ground,
 And talk'd away—and might have talk'd till now,
 For any further answer that he found,
 So deep an anguish wrung Gulbeyaz' brow;
 Her cheek turn'd ashes, ears rung, brain whirl'd round,
 As if she had received a sudden blow,
 And the heart's dew of pain sprang fast and chilly
 O'er her fair front, like morning's on a lily.

CVI.

Although she was not of the fainting sort,
 Baba thought she would faint, but there he err'd—
 It was but a convulsion, which, though short,
 Can never be described; we all have heard,
 And some of us have felt thus *all amort*,¹⁰
 When things beyond the common have occur'd;
 Gulbeyaz proved in that brief agony
 What she could ne'er express—then how should I?

CVII.

She stood a moment, as a Pythoness
 Stands on her tripod, agonized, and full
 Of inspiration gather'd from distress,
 When all the heart-strings like wild horses pull
 The heart asunder;—then, as more or less
 Their speed abated or their strength grew dull,
 She sunk down on her seat by slow degrees,
 And bow'd her throbbing head o'er trembling knees.

CVIII.

Her face declined and was unseen; her hair
 Fell in long tresses like the weeping willow,
 Sweeping the marble underneath her chair,
 Or rather sofa (for it was all pillow,
 A low, soft ottoman), and black despair
 Stirr'd up and down her bosom like a billow,
 Which rushes to some shore whose shingles check
 Its farther course, but must receive its wreck.

CIX.

Her head hung down, and her long hair in stooping
 Conceal'd her features better than a veil;
 And one hand o'er the ottoman lay drooping,
 White, waxen, and as alabaster pale:
 Would that I were a painter! to be grouping
 All that a poet drags into detail!
 Oh that my words were colours! but their tints
 May serve perhaps as outlines or slight hints.

CX.

Baba, who knew by experience when to talk
 And when to hold his tongue, now held it till
 This passion might blow o'er, nor dared to balk
 Gulbeyaz' taciturn or speaking will.
 At length she rose up, and began to walk
 Slowly along the room, but silent still,
 And her brow clear'd, but not her troubled eye—
 The wind was down, but still the sea ran high.

CXI.

She stopp'd, and raised her head to speak—but paused,
 And then moved on again with rapid pace ;
 Then slacken'd it, which is the march most caused
 By deep emotion :—you may sometimes trace
 A feeling in each footstep, as disclosed
 By Sallust in his Catiline, who, chased
 By all the demons of all passions, show'd
 Their work even by the way in which he trode.

CXII.

Gulbeyaz stopp'd and beckon'd Baba :—“ Slave !
 Bring the two slaves ! ” she said in a low tone,
 But one which Baba did not like to brave,
 And yet he shudder'd, and seem'd rather prone
 To prove reluctant, and begg'd leave to crave
 (Though he well knew the meaning) to be shown
 What slaves her highness wish'd to indicate,
 For fear of any error, like the late.

CXIII.

“ The Georgian and her paramour,” replied
 The imperial bride—and added, “ Let the boat
 Be ready by the secret portal's side :
 You know the rest.” The words stuck in her throat,
 Despite her injured love and fiery pride ;
 And of this Baba willingly took note,
 And begg'd, by every hair of Mahomet's beard,
 She would revoke the order he had heard.

CXIV.

“ To hear is to obey,” he said ; “ but still,
 Sultana, think upon the consequence :
 It is not that I shall not all fulfil
 Your orders, even in their severest sense ;
 But such precipitation may end ill,
 Even at your own imperative expense ;
 I do not mean destruction and exposure
 In case of any premature disclosure ;

CXV.

“But your own feelings.—Even should all the rest
 Be hidden by the rolling waves, which hide
 Already many a once love-beaten breast
 Deep in the caverns of the deadly tide—
 You love this boyish, new, seraglio guest,
 And—if this violent remedy be tried—
 Excuse my freedom, when I here assure you,
 That killing him is not the way to cure you.”

CXVI.

“What dost thou know of love or feeling?—wretch!
 Begone!” she cried, with kindling eyes, “and do
 My bidding!” Baba vanish’d; for to stretch
 His own remonstrance further, he well knew,
 Might end in acting as his own “Jack Ketch;”
 And, though he wish’d extremely to get through
 This awkward business without harm to others,
 He still preferr’d his own neck to another’s.

CXVII.

Away he went then upon his commission,
 Growling and grumbling in good Turkish phrase
 Against all women, of whate’er condition,
 Especially sultanas and their ways;
 Their obstinacy, pride, and indecision,
 Their never knowing their own mind two days,
 The trouble that they gave, their immorality,
 Which made him daily bless his own neutrality.

CXVIII.

And then he call’d his brethren to his aid,
 And sent one on a summons to the pair,
 That they must instantly be well array’d,
 And, above all, be comb’d even to a hair,
 And brought before the empress, who had made
 Inquiries after them with kindest care:
 At which Dudû look’d strange, and Juan silly;
 But go they must at once, and will I—nill I.

CXIX.

And here I leave them at their preparation
 For the imperial presence, wherein whether
 Gulbeyaz show’d them both commiseration,
 Or got rid of the parties altogether,
 Like other angry ladies of her nation—
 Are things the turning of a hair or feather
 May settle; but far be ’t from me to anticipate
 In what way feminine caprice may dissipate.

CXX.

I leave them for the present, with good wishes,
 Though doubts of their well doing, to arrange
 Another part of history ; for the dishes
 Of this our banquet we must sometimes change :
 And, trusting Juan may escape the fishes,
 Although his situation now seems strange
 And scarce secure, as such digressions *are* fair,
 The Muse will take a little touch at warfare.

NOTES TO CANTO VI.

Note 1. Stanza i.

See SHAKSPEARE, *Julius Cæsar*, act iv, sc. iii.

Note 2. Stanza ii. *Lausitz*

A noted visionary, born near Gœrlitz, in Upper Alsatia in 1575, and founder of the sect called Behmenites.—E.

Note 3. Stanza xii.

"At Ware, the inn known by the sign of the Saracen's Head still contains the famous *bed*, measuring *twelve feet square*, to which an allusion is made by Shakspeare in 'Twelfth Night.'"—CLUTTERBUCK's *Hertford*.

Note 4. Stanza xvii.

"The blessed Francis, being strongly solicited one day by the emotions of the flesh, pulled off his clothes and scourged himself soundly. Being after this inflamed with a wonderful fervour of mind, he plunged his naked body into a great heap of snow. The devil, being overcome, retired immediately, and the holy man returned victorious into his cell."—BUTLER's *Lives of the Saints*.

Note 5. Stanza xxv.

The *bards* of Queen Caroline, in the Times newspaper, were continually, during the period of her trial, ringing the changes on the "driven snow" of her purity.—E.

Note 6. Stanza xxvii.

Caligula—see Suetonius.

Note 7. Stanza xli.

Padisha is the Turkish title of the Grand Signior.

Note 8. Stanza lxxv.

"Nell' mezzo del' cammin' di nostra vita
Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura," &c.—DANTE.

Note 9. Stanza lxxviii.

One of the advocates employed for Queen Caroline in the House of Lords spoke of some of the most puzzling passages in the history of her intercourse with Bergami, as amounting to "odd instances of strange coincidence."—E.

Note 10. Stanza cvi.

"How fares my Kate? What! sweeting, all amort?"—*Taming of the shrew*.

Canto V, written at Ravenna in 1820, was published in 1821, with Cantos III and IV. Here the Poet meant to stop—for what reason the following letter of his will show:—

July 6. 1821.—"At the particular request of the Contessa Guiccioli I have promised *not* to continue Don Juan. You will therefore look upon these three Cantos as the last of the poem. She had read the two first in the French translation, and never ceased beseeching me to write no more of it. The reason of this is not at first obvious to a superficial observer of FOREIGN manners; but it arises from the wish of all women to exalt the sentiment of the passions, and to keep up the illusion which is their empire. Now, Don Juan strips off the illusion, and laughs at that and most other things."

Lord Byron's resumption of his poem is likewise explained in these lines:

Pisa, July 8. 1822.—"It is not impossible that I may have three or four cantos of Don Juan ready by autumn, or a little later, as I obtained a permission from my dictatress to continue it, —*provided always* it was to be more guarded and decorous and sentimental in the continuation than in the commencement. How far these conditions have been fulfilled may be seen, perhaps, by and by; but the embargo was only taken off upon these stipulations.—E.

CANTO VII.

I.

OH Love ! oh Glory ! what are ye ? who fly
 Around us ever, rarely to alight :
 There 's not a meteor in the polar sky
 Of such transcendent and more fleeting flight.
 Chill, and chain'd to cold earth, we lift on high
 Our eyes in search of either lovely light ;
 A thousand and a thousand colours they
 Assume, then leave us on our freezing way.

II.

And such as they are, such my present tale is,
 A non-descript and ever-varying rhyme,
 A versified aurora borealis,
 Which flashes o'er a waste and icy clime.
 When we know what all are, we must bewail us,
 But ne'ertheless I hope it is no crime
 To laugh at *all* things ; for I wish to know
 What, after *all*, are *all* things—but a *show* ?

III.

They accuse me—*me*—the present writer of
 The present poem, of—I know not what,—
 A tendency to under-rate and scoff
 At human power and virtue, and all that ;
 And this they say in language rather rough.
 Good God ! I wonder what they would be at !
 I say no more than has been said in Dante's
 Verse, and by Solomon, and by Cervantes ;

IV.

By Swift, by Machiavel, by Larochefoucault ;
 By Fenelon, by Luther, and by Plato ;
 By Tillotson, and Wesley, and Rousseau,
 Who knew this life was not worth a potato.
 'T is not their fault, nor mine, if this be so—
 For my part, I pretend not to be Cato,
 Nor even Diogenes.—We live and die,
 But which is best, you know no more than I.

V.

Socrates said, our only knowledge was
 "To know that nothing could be known;" a pleasant
 Science enough, which levels to an ass
 Each man of wisdom, future, past, or present.
 Newton (that proverb of the mind), alas!
 Declared, with all his grand discoveries recent,
 That he himself felt only "like a youth
 Picking up shells by the great ocean—truth."

VI.

Ecclesiastes said, that all is vanity—
 Most modern preachers say the same, or show it
 By their examples of true christianity;
 In short, all know, or very soon may know it.
 And in this scene of all-confess'd inanity,
 By saint, by sage, by preacher, and by poet,
 Must I restrain me, through the fear of strife,
 From holding up the nothingness of life?

VII.

Dogs, or men! (for I flatter you in saying
 That ye are dogs—your betters far) ye may
 Read, or read not, what I am now essaying
 To show ye what ye are in every way.
 As little as the moon stops for the baying
 Of wolves, will the bright Muse withdraw one ray
 From out her skies;—then howl your idle wrath!
 While she still silvers o'er your gloomy path.

VIII.

"Fierce loves and faithless wars"—I am not sure
 If this be the right reading—'t is no matter;
 The fact 's about the same, I am secure;—
 I sing them both, and am about to batter
 A town which did a famous siege endure,
 And was beleaguer'd both by land and water
 By Suvaroff, or anglicè Suwarrow,
 Who loved blood as an alderman loves marrow.

IX.

The fortress is call'd Ismail, and is placed
 Upon the Danube's left branch and left bank,
 With buildings in the oriental taste,
 But still a fortress of the foremost rank;
 Or was at least, unless 't is since defaced,
 Which with your conquerors is a common prank:
 It stands some eighty versts from the high sea,
 And measures round of toises thousands three.

X.

Within the extent of this fortification
 A borough is comprised, along the height
 Upon the left, which, from its loftier station,
 Commands the city, and upon its site
 A Greek had raised around this elevation
 A quantity of palisades *upright*,
 So placed as to *impede* the fire of those
 Who held the place, and to *assist* the foe's.

XI.

This circumstance may serve to give a notion
 Of the high talents of this new Vauban :
 But the town ditch below was deep as ocean,
 The rampart higher than you 'd wish to hang :
 But then there was a great want of precaution
 (Prithee, excuse this engineering slang),
 Nor work advanced, nor cover'd way was there,
 To hint at least, "Here is no thoroughfare."

XII.

But a stone bastion, with a narrow gorge,
 And walls as thick as most skulls born as yet;
 Two batteries, cap-à-pié, as our Saint George,
 Casemated one, and t' other "à barbette,"
 Of Danube's bank took formidable charge ;
 While two-and-twenty cannon, duly set,
 Rose o'er the town's right side, in bristling tier,
 Forty feet high, upon a cavalier.

XIII.

But from the river the town 's open quite,
 Because the Turks could never be persuaded
 A Russian vessel e'er would heave in sight ;
 And such their creed was till they were invaded,
 When it grew rather late to set things right.
 But as the Danube could not well be waded,
 They look'd upon the Muscovite flotilla,
 And only shouted, "Allah !" and "Bis Millah !"

XIV.

The Russians now were ready to attack ;
 But oh, ye goddesses of war and glory !
 How shall I spell the name of each Cossack
 Who were immortal, could one tell their story ?
 Alas ! what to their memory can lack ?
 Achilles' self was not more grim and gory
 Than thousands of this new and polish'd nation,
 Whose names want nothing but—pronunciation.

XV.

Still I 'll record a few, if but to increase
 Our euphony—there was Strongenoff, and Strokonoff,
 Meknop, Serge Lwow, Arseniew of modern Greece,
 And Tschitsshakoff, and Roguenoff, and Chokenoff,
 And others of twelve consonants a piece :
 And more might be found out, if I could poke enough
 Into gazettes; but fame (capricious strumpet!)
 It seems has got an ear as well as trumpet,

XVI.

And cannot tune those discords of narration,
 Which may be names at Moscow, into rhyme.
 Yet there were several worth commemoration,
 As e'er was virgin of a nuptial chime ;
 Soft words too, fitted for the peroration
 Of Londonderry, drawling against time,
 Ending in " ischskin," " ousckin," " iffskchy," " ouski,"
 Of whom we can insert but Rousamouski,

XVII.

Scherematoff and Chrematoff, Koklophti,
 Koclobski, Kourakin, and Mouskin Pouskin,
 All proper men of weapons, as e'er scoff'd high
 Against a foe, or ran a sabre through skin ;
 Little cared they for Mahomet or mufti,
 Unless to make their kettle-drums a new skin
 Out of their hides, if parchment had grown dear,
 And no more handy substitute been near.

XVIII.

Then there were foreigners of much renown,
 Of various nations, and all volunteers ;
 Not fighting for their country or its crown,
 But wishing to be one day brigadiers ;
 Also to have the sacking of a town—
 A pleasant thing to young men at their years.
 'Mongst them were several Englishmen of pith,
 Sixteen call'd Thompson, and nineteen named Smith.

XIX.

Jack Thompson and Bill Thompson ;—all the rest
 Had been call'd "*Jemmy*," after the great bard ;
 I don't know whether they had arms or crest,
 But such a godfather 's as good a card.
 Three of the Smiths were Peters ; but the best
 Amongst them all, hard blows to inflict or ward,
 Was *he*, since so renown'd " in country quarters
 At Halifax ;" but now he served the Tartars.

XX.

The rest were Jacks and Gills, and Wills and Bills ;
 But when I 've added that the elder Jack Smith
 Was born in Cumberland among the hills,
 And that his father was an honest blacksmith,
 I 've said all *I* know of a name that fills
 Three lines of the dispatch in taking " Schmacksmith,"
 A village of Moldavia's waste, wherein
 He fell, immortal in a bulletin.

XXI.

I wonder (although Mars no doubt 's a god I
 Praise) if a man's name in a *bulletin*
 May make up for a *bullet* in his body ?
 I hope this little question is no sin,
 Because, though I am but a simple noddy,
 I think one Shakspeare put the same thought in
 The mouth of some one in his plays so doating,
 Which many people pass for wits by quoting.

XXII.

Then there were Frenchmen, gallant, young, and gay :
 But I 'm too great a patriot to record
 Their Gallic names upon a glorious day ;
 I 'd rather tell ten lies than say a word
 Of truth ;—such truths are treason : they betray
 Their country, and as traitors are abhorr'd,
 Who name the French in English, save to show
 How peace should make John Bull the Frenchman's foe.

XXIII.

The Russians, having built two batteries on
 An isle near Ismail, had two ends in view :
 The first was to bombard it, and knock down
 The public buildings, and the private too,
 No matter what poor souls might be undone.
 The city's shape suggested this, 't is true ;
 Form'd like an amphitheatre, each dwelling
 Presented a fine mark to throw a shell in.

XXIV.

The second object was to profit by
 The moment of the general consternation,
 To attack the Turk's flotilla, which lay nigh,
 Extremely tranquil, anchor'd at its station :
 But a third motive was as probably
 To frighten them into capitulation ;
 A phantasy which sometimes seizes warriors,
 Unless they are game as bull-dogs and fox-terriers.

XXV.

A habit rather blameable, which is
 That of despising those we combat with,
 Common in many cases, was in this
 The cause of killing Tchitchitzkoff and Smith;
 One of the valorous "Smiths" whom we shall miss
 Out of those nineteen who late rhymed to "pith;"
 But 't is a name so spread o'er "Sir" and "Madam,"
 That one would think the FIRST who bore it "ADAM."

XXVI.

The Russian batteries were incomplete,
 Because they were constructed in a hurry.
 Thus the same cause which makes a verse want feet,
 And throws a cloud o'er Longman and John Murray
 When the sale of new books is not so fleet
 As they who print them think is necessary,
 May likewise put off for a time what story
 Sometimes calls "murder," and at others "glory."

XXVII.

Whether it was their engineers' stupidity,
 Their haste, or waste, I neither know nor care,
 Or some contractor's personal cupidity,
 Saving his soul by cheating in the ware
 Of homicide; but there was no solidity
 In the new batteries erected there;
 They either miss'd, or they were never miss'd,
 And added greatly to the missing list.

XXVIII.

A sad miscalculation about distance
 Made all their naval matters incorrect;
 Three fire-ships lost their amiable existence
 Before they reach'd a spot to take effect;
 The match was lit too soon, and no assistance
 Could remedy this lubberly defect;
 They blew up in the middle of the river,
 While, though 't was dawn, the Turks slept fast as ever.

XXIX.

At seven they rose, however, and survey'd
 The Russ flotilla getting under way;
 'T was nine, when still advancing undismay'd,
 Within a cable's length their vessels lay
 Off Ismail, and commenced a cannonade,
 Which was return'd with interest, I may say,
 And by a fire of musketry and grape,
 And shells and shot of every size and shape.

XXX.

For six hours bore they without intermission
 The Turkish fire ; and, aided by their own
 Land batteries, work'd their guns with great precision :
 At length they found mere cannonade alone
 By no means would produce the town's submission,
 And made a signal to retreat at one.
 One bark blew up ; a second, near the works
 Running aground, was taken by the Turks.

XXXI.

The Moslem too had lost both ships and men ;
 But when they saw the enemy retire,
 Their Delhis mann'd some boats, and sail'd again,
 And gall'd the Russians with a heavy fire,
 And tried to make a landing on the main.
 But here the effect fell short of their desire :
 Count Damas drove them back into the water
 Pell-mell, and with a whole gazette of slaughter.

XXXII.

"If" (says the historian here) "I could report
 All that the Russians did upon this day,
 I think that several volumes would fall short,
 And I should still have many things to say ;"
 And so he says no more—but pays his court
 To some distinguish'd strangers in that fray,
 The Prince de Ligne, and Langeron, and Damas,
 Names great as any that the roll of fame has.

XXXIII.

This being the case, may show us what fame is :
 For out of three "*preux chevaliers*," how
 Many of common readers give a guess
 That such existed ? (and they may live now,
 For aught we know.) Renown's all hit or miss ;
 There's fortune even in fame, we must allow.
 'T is true the Memoirs of the Prince de Ligne
 Have half withdrawn from *him* oblivion's screen.

XXXIV.

But here are men who fought in gallant actions
 As gallantly as ever heroes fought,
 But buried in the heap of such transactions,
 Their names are seldom found, nor often sought.
 Thus even good fame may suffer sad contractions,
 And is extinguish'd sooner than she ought :
 Of all our modern battles, I will bet
 You can't repeat nine names from each gazette.

XXXV.

In short, this last attack, though rich in glory,
 Show'd that *somewhere, somehow*, there was a fault;
 And Admiral Ribas (known in Russian story)
 Most strongly recommended an assault;
 In which he was opposed by young and hoary,
 Which made a long debate :—but I must halt;
 For if I wrote down every warrior's speech,
 I doubt few readers e'er would mount the breach.

XXXVI.

There was a man, if that he was a man,—
 Not that his manhood could be call'd in question,
 For, had he not been Hercules, his span
 Had been as short in youth as indigestion
 Made his last illness, when, all worn and wan,
 He died beneath a tree, as much unblest on
 The soil of the green province he had wasted,
 As e'er was locust on the land it blasted;—

XXXVII.

This was Potemkin—a great thing in days
 When homicide and harlotry made great:
 If stars and titles could entail long praise,
 His glory might half equal his estate.
 This fellow, being six foot high, could raise
 A kind of phantasy proportionate
 In the then sovereign of the Russian people,
 Who measured men as you would do a steeple.

XXXVIII.

While things were in abeyance, Ribas sent
 A courier to the prince, and he succeeded
 In ordering matters after his own bent.
 I cannot tell the way in which he pleaded,
 But shortly he had cause to be content.
 In the mean time the batteries proceeded,
 And fourscore cannon on the Danube's border
 Were briskly fired, and answer'd in due order.

XXXIX.

But on the thirteenth, when already part
 Of the troops were embark'd, the siege to raise,
 A courier on the spur inspired new heart
 Into all panthers for newspaper praise,
 As well as diletanti in war's art,
 By his dispatches couch'd in pithy phrase,
 Announcing the appointment of that lover of
 Battles, to the command, Field-Marshal Suvaroff.

XL.

The letter of the prince to the same marshal
 Was worthy of a Spartan, had the cause
 Been one to which a good heart could be partial,
 Defence of freedom, country, or of laws ;
 But as it was mere lust of power to o'er-arch all
 With his proud brow, it merits slight applause,
 Save for its style, which said, all in a trice,
 " You will take Ismail, at whatever price."

XLI.

" Let there be light ! said God, and there was light !"
 " Let there be blood !" says man, and there 's a sea !
 The fiat of this spoil'd child of the night
 (For day ne'er saw his merits) could decree
 More evil in an hour, than thirty bright
 Summers could renovate, though they should be
 Lovely as those which ripen'd Eden's fruit—
 For war cuts up not only branch, but root.

XLII.

Our friends the Turks, who with loud " Allahs " now
 Began to signalize the Russ retreat,
 Were damnably mistaken ; few are slow
 In thinking that their enemy is beat
 (Or *beaten*, if *you* insist on grammar, though
 I never think about it in a heat) ;
 But here I say the Turks were much mistaken,
 Who, hating hogs, yet wish'd to save their bacon.

XLIII.

For, on the sixteenth, at full gallop drew
 In sight two horsemen, who were deem'd Cossacks
 For some time, till they came in nearer view.
 They had but little baggage at their backs,
 For there were but *three* shirts between the two ;
 But on they rode upon two Ukraine hacks,
 Till, in approaching, were at length descried
 In this plain pair, Suwarrow and his guide.

XLIV.

" Great joy to London now !" says some great fool,
 When London had a grand illumination,
 Which to that bottle-conjuror, John Bull,
 Is of all dreams the first hallucination ;
 So that the streets of colour'd lamps are full,
 That sage (*said* John) surrenders at discretion
 His purse, his soul, his sense, and even his nonsense,
 To gratify, like a huge moth, this *one* sense.

XLV.

'T is strange that he should further "damn his eyes,"
 For they are damn'd : that once all-famous oath
 Is to the devil now no further prize,
 Since John has lately lost the use of both.
 Debt he calls wealth, and taxes paradise ;
 And famine, with her gaunt and bony growth,
 Which stares him in the face, he won't examine,
 Or swears that Ceres hath begotten famine.

XLVI.

But to the tale. Great joy unto the camp !
 To Russian, Tartar, English, French, Cossack,
 O'er whom Suwarrow shone like a gas-lamp,
 Presaging a most luminous attack ;
 Or like a wisp along the marsh so damp,
 Which leads beholders on a boggy walk,
 He flitted to and fro, a dancing light,
 Which all who saw it follow'd, wrong or right.

XLVII.

But, certes, matters took a different face ;
 There was enthusiasm and much applause,
 The fleet and camp saluted with great grace,
 And all presaged good fortune to their cause.
 Within a cannon-shot length of the place
 They drew, constructed ladders, repair'd flaws
 In former works, made new, prepared fascines,
 And all kinds of benevolent machines.

XLVIII.

'T is thus the spirit of a single mind
 Makes that of multitudes take one direction,
 As roll the waters to the breathing wind,
 Or roams the herd beneath the bull's protection ;
 Or as a little dog will lead the blind,
 Or a bell-wether form the flock's connexion
 By tinkling sounds when they go forth to victual :
 Such is the sway of your great men o'er little.

XLIX.

The whole camp rung with joy ; you would have thought
 That they were going to a marriage-feast
 (This metaphor, I think, holds good as aught,
 Since there is discord after both at least).
 There was not now a luggage-boy but sought
 Danger and spoil with ardour much increased :
 And why ? because a little, old, odd man,
 Stript to his shirt, was come to lead the van.

L.

But so it was ; and every preparation
 Was made with all alacrity ; the first
 Detachment of three columns took its station,
 And waited but the signal's voice to burst
 Upon the foe : the second's ordination
 Was also in three columns, with a thirst
 For glory gaping o'er a sea of slaughter :
 The third, in columns two, attack'd by water.

LI.

New batteries were erected ; and was held
 A general council, in which unanimity,
 That stranger to most councils, here prevail'd,
 As sometimes happens in a great extremity ;
 And, every difficulty being expell'd,
 Glory began to dawn with due sublimity,
 While Suvaroff, determined to obtain it,
 Was teaching his recruits to use the bayonet.

LII.

It is an actual fact, that he, commander
 In chief, in proper person, deign'd to drill
 The awkward squad, and could afford to squander
 His time, a corporal's duties to fulfil :
 Just as you 'd break a sucking salamander
 To swallow flame, and never take it ill ;
 He show'd them how to mount a ladder (which
 Was not like Jacob's) or to cross a ditch.

LIII.

Also he dress'd up, for the nonce, fascines
 Like men, with turbans, scimitars, and dirks,
 And made them charge with bayonet these machines,
 By way of lesson against actual Turks ;
 And, when well practised in these mimic scenes,
 He judged them proper to assail the works ;
 At which your wise men sneer'd in phrases witty :
 He made no answer ; but he took the city.

LIV.

Most things were in this posture on the eve
 Of the assault, and all the camp was in
 A stern repose : which you would scarce conceive ;
 Yet men resolved to dash through thick and thin,
 Are very silent when they once believe
 That all is settled :—there was little din,
 For some were thinking of their home and friends,
 And others of themselves and latter ends.

LV.

Suwarrow chiefly was on the alert,
 Surveying, drilling, ordering, jesting, pondering,
 For the man was, we safely may assert,
 A thing to wonder at beyond most wondering ;
 Hero, buffoon, half-demon, and half-dirt,
 Praying, instructing, desolating, plundering ;
 Now Mars, now Momus ; and when bent to storm
 A fortress, harlequin in uniform.

LVI.

The day before the assault, while upon drill—
 For this great conqueror play'd the corporal—
 Some Cossacks, hovering like hawks round a hill,
 Had met a party towards the twilight's fall,
 One of whom spoke their tongue, or well or ill—
 'T was much that he was understood at all ;
 But whether from his voice, or speech, or manner,
 They found that he had fought beneath their banner.

LVII.

Whereon, immediately at his request,
 They brought him and his comrades to head-quarters :
 Their dress was Moslem, but you might have guess'd
 That these were merely masquerading Tartars,
 And that beneath each Turkish-fashion'd vest
 Lurk'd Christianity ; who sometimes barter
 Her inward grace for outward show, and makes
 It difficult to shun some strange mistakes.

LVIII.

Suwarrow, who was standing in his shirt
 Before a company of Calmucks, drilling,
 Exclaiming, fooling, swearing at the inert,
 And lecturing on the noble art of killing,—
 For, deeming human clay but common dirt,
 This great philosopher was thus instilling
 His maxims, which, to martial comprehension,
 Proved death in battle equal to a pension ;—

LIX.

Suwarrow, when he saw this company
 Of Cossacks and their prey, turn'd round and cast
 Upon them his slow brow and piercing eye :—
 " Whence come ye ?"—" From Constantinople last,
 Captives just now escaped," was the reply.
 " What are ye ?"—" What you see us." Briefly past
 This dialogue ; for he who answer'd knew
 To whom he spoke, and made his words but few.

LX.

“Your names?”—“Mine’s Johnson, and my comrade’s Juan;
 The other two are women, and the third
 Is neither man nor woman.” The chief threw on
 The party a slight glance, then said: “I have heard
 Your name before, the second is a new one;
 To bring the other three here was absurd;
 But let that pass;—I think I’ve heard your name
 In the Nikolaiew regiment?”—“The same.”—

LXI.

“You served at Widdin?”—“Yes.”—“You led the attack?”
 “I did.”—“What next?”—“I really hardly know.”
 “You were the first i’ the breach?”—“I was not slack,
 At least, to follow those who might be so.”
 “What follow’d?”—“A shot laid me on my back,
 And I became a prisoner to the foe.”
 “You shall have vengeance, for the town surrounded
 Is twice as strong as that where you were wounded.

LXII.

“Where will you serve?”—“Where’er you please.”—“I know
 You like to be the hope of the forlorn,
 And doubtless would be foremost on the foe
 After the hardships you’ve already borne.
 And this young fellow? say, what can he do,
 He with the beardless chin and garments torn?”
 “Why, general, if he hath no greater fault
 In war than love, he had better lead the assault.”

LXIII.

“He shall, if that he dare.” Here Juan bow’d
 Low as the compliment deserved. Suwarrow
 Continued: “Your old regiment’s allow’d,
 By special providence, to lead to-morrow,
 Or it may be to-night, the assault: I’ve vow’d
 To several saints, that shortly plough or harrow
 Shall pass o’er what was Ismail, and its tusk
 Be unimpeded by the proudest mosque.

LXIV.

“So now, my lads, for glory!”—Here he turn’d,
 And drill’d away in the most classic Russian,
 Until each high heroic bosom burn’d
 For cash and conquest, as if from a cushion
 A preacher had held forth (who nobly spurn’d
 All earthly goods save tithes) and bade them push on
 To slay the pagans who resisted, battering
 The armies of the christian Empress Catherine.

LXV.

Johnson, who knew by this long colloquy
 Himself a favourite, ventured to address
 Suwarrow, though engaged with accents high
 In his resumed amusement. "I confess
 My debt in being thus allow'd to die
 Among the foremost; but if you'd express
 Explicitly our several posts, my friend,
 And self would know what duty to attend."

LXVI.

"Right! I was busy, and forgot. Why, you
 Will join your former regiment, which should be
 Now under arms. Ho! Katskoff, take him to—
 (Here he call'd up a Polish orderly)—
 His post, I mean the regiment Nikolaiew.
 The stranger stripling may remain with me;
 He's a fine boy. The women may be sent
 To the other baggage, or to the sick tent."

LXVII.

But here a sort of scene began to ensue:
 The ladies, who by no means had been bred
 To be disposed of in a way so new,
 Although their haram education led
 Doubtless to that of doctrines the most true,
 Passive obedience,—now raised up the head,
 With flashing eyes and starting tears, and flung
 Their arms, as hens their wings about their young,

LXVIII.

O'er the promoted couple of brave men
 Who were thus honour'd by the greatest chief
 That ever peopled hell with heroes slain,
 Or plunged a province or a realm in grief.
 Oh, foolish mortals! always taught in vain!
 Oh, glorious laurel! since for one sole leaf
 Of thine imaginary deathless tree,
 Of blood and tears must flow the unebbing sea.

LXIX.

Suwarrow, who had small regard for tears,
 And not much sympathy for blood, survey'd
 The women with their hair about their ears,
 And natural agonies, with a slight shade
 Of feeling: for, however habit sears
 Men's hearts against whole millions, when their trade
 Is butchery, sometimes a single sorrow
 Will touch even heroes—and such was Suwarrow.

LXX.

He said—and in the kindest Calmuck tone,—

“Why, Johnson, what the devil do you mean
By bringing women here? They shall be shown
All the attention possible, and seen
In safety to the waggons, where alone
In fact they can be safe. You should have been
Aware this kind of baggage never thrives :
Save wed a year, I hate recruits with wives.”

LXXI.

“May it please your excellency,” thus replied
Our British friend, “these are the wives of others,
And not our own. I am too qualified
By service with my military brothers,
To break the rules by bringing one’s own bride
Into a camp; I know that nought so bothers
The hearts of the heroic on a charge,
As leaving a small family at large.

LXXII.

“But these are but two Turkish ladies, who
With their attendant aided our escape,
And afterwards accompanied us through
A thousand perils in this dubious shape.
To me this kind of life is not so new ;
To them, poor things ! it is an awkward step ;
I therefore, if you wish me to fight freely,
Request that they may both be used genteelly.”

LXXIII.

Meantime these two poor girls, with swimming eyes,
Look’d on as if in doubt if they could trust
Their own protectors; nor was their surprise
Less than their grief (and truly not less just)
To see an old man, rather wild than wise
In aspect, plainly clad, besmear’d with dust,
Stript to his waistcoat, and *that not* too clean,
More fear’d than all the sultans ever seen.

LXXIV.

For every thing seem’d resting on his nod,
As they could read in all eyes. Now, to them,
Who were accustom’d, as a sort of god,
To see the sultan, rich in many a gem,
Like an imperial peacock stalk abroad
(That royal bird, whose tail’s a diadem),
With all the pomp of power, it was a doubt
How power could condescend to do without.

LXXV.

John Johnson, seeing their extreme dismay,
 Though little versed in feelings oriental,
 Suggested some slight comfort in his way.
 Don Juan, who was much more sentimental,
 Swore they should see him by the dawn of day,
 Or that the Russian army should repent all;
 And, strange to say, they found some consolation
 In this—for females like exaggeration.

LXXVI.

And then with tears, and sighs, and some slight kisses,
 They parted for the present—these to await,
 According to the artillery's hits or misses,
 What sages call chance, providence, or fate—
 (Uncertainty is one of many blisses,
 A mortgage on humanity's estate)—
 While their beloved friends began to arm,
 To burn a town which never did them harm.

LXXVII.

Suwarrow, who but saw things in the gross,
 Being much too gross to see them in detail;
 Who calculated life as so much dross,
 And as the wind a widow'd nation's wail,
 And cared as little for his army's loss
 (So that their efforts should at length prevail)
 As wife and friends did for the boils of Job;—
 What was 't to him to hear two women sob?

LXXVIII.

Nothing. The work of glory still went on
 In preparations for a cannonade
 As terrible as that of Ilion,
 If Homer had found mortars ready made;
 But now, instead of slaying Priam's son,
 We only can but talk of escalade,
 Bombs, drums, guns, bastions, batteries, bayonets, bullets;
 Hard words which stick in the soft Muses' gullets.

LXXIX.

Oh, thou eternal Homer! who couldst charm
 All ears, though long,—all ages, though so short,
 By merely wielding with poetic arm
 Arms to which men will never more resort,
 Unless gunpowder should be found to harm
 Much less than is the hope of every court,
 Which now is leagued young freedom to annoy;
 But they will not find liberty a Troy:—

LXXX.

Oh! thou eternal Homer! I have now
 To paint a siege, wherein more men were slain,
 With deadlier engines and a speedier blow,
 Than in thy Greek gazette of that campaign;
 And yet, like all men else, I must allow,
 To vie with thee would be about as vain
 As for a brook to cope with ocean's flood;
 But still we moderns equal you in blood—

LXXXI.

If not in poetry, at least in fact;
 And fact is truth, the grand desideratum!
 Of which, howe'er the Muse describes each act,
 There should be, ne'ertheless, a slight substratum.
 But now the town is going to be attack'd;
 Great deeds are doing—how shall I relate 'em?
 Souls of immortal generals! Phœbus watches,
 To colour up his rays from your despatches.

LXXXII.

Oh, ye great bulletins of Bonaparte!
 Oh, ye less grand long lists of kill'd and wounded!
 Shade of Leonidas! who fought so hearty,
 When my poor Greece was once, as now, surrounded!
 Oh, Cæsar's Commentaries! now impart, ye,
 Shadows of glory! (lest I be confounded)
 A portion of your fading twilight hues,
 So beautiful, so fleeting, to the Muse.

LXXXIII.

When I call “fading” martial immortality,
 I mean, that every age and every year,
 And almost every day, in sad reality,
 Some sucking hero is compell'd to rear,
 Who, when we come to sum up the totality
 Of deeds to human happiness most dear,
 Turns out to be a butcher in great business,
 Afflicting young folks with a sort of dizziness.

LXXXIV.

Medals, ranks, ribbons, lace, embroidery, scarlet,
 Are things immortal to immortal man,
 As purple to the Babylonian harlot:
 An uniform to boys is like a fan
 To women; there is scarce a crimson varlet
 But deems himself the first in glory's van.
 But glory's glory; and if you would find
 What that is—ask the pig who sees the wind!

LXXXV.

At least *he feels it*, and some say *he sees*,
 Because he runs before it like a pig;
 Or, if that simple sentence should displease,
 Say that he scuds before it like a brig,
 A schooner, or—but it is time to ease
 This canto, ere my Muse perceives fatigue.
 The next shall ring a peal to shake all people,
 Like a bob major from a village steeple.

LXXXVI.

Hark! through the silence of the cold dull night,
 The hum of armies gathering rank on rank!
 Lo! dusky masses steal in dubious sight
 Along the leaguer'd wall and bristling bank
 Of the arm'd river, while with straggling light
 The stars peep through the vapours dim and dank,
 Which curl in curious wreaths—How soon the smoke
 Of hell shall pall them in a deeper cloak!

LXXXVII.

Here pause we for the present—as even then
 That awful pause, dividing life from death,
 Struck for an instant on the hearts of men,
 Thousands of whom were drawing their last breath!
 A moment—and all will be life again!
 The march! the charge! the snouts of either faith!
 Hurra! and Allah! and—one moment more—
 The death-cry drowning in the battle's roar.

NOTES TO CANTO VII.

Note 1. Stanza xix.

See the farce of "Love Laughs at Locksmiths."

Note 2. Stanza li.

Fact: Suwaroff did this in person.

CANTO VIII.

I.

OH blood and thunder ! and oh blood and wounds !

These are but vulgar oaths, as you may deem,
Too gentle reader ! and most shocking sounds :

And so they are ; yet thus is glory's dream
Unriddled, and as my true Muse expounds

At present such things, since they are her theme,
So be they her inspirers ! Call them Mars,
Bellona, what you will—they mean but wars.

II.

All was prepared—the fire, the sword, the men
To wield them in their terrible array.

The army, like a lion from his den,

March'd forth with nerve and sinews bent to slay—
A human Hydra, issuing from its fen

To breathe destruction on its winding way,
Whose heads were heroes, which, cut off in vain,
Immediately in others grew again.

III.

History can only take things in the gross ;

But could we know them in detail, perchance,
In balancing the profit and the loss,

War's merit it by no means might enhance,
To waste so much gold for a little dross,

As hath been done, mere conquest to advance.
The drying up a single tear has more
Of honest fame than shedding seas of gore.

IV.

And why ? because it brings self-approbation ;

Whereas the other, after all its glare,
Shouts, bridges, arches, pensions from a nation—

Which (it may be) has not much left to spare—
A higher title, or a loftier station,

Though they may make corruption gape or stare,
Yet, in the end, except in freedom's battles,
Are nothing but a child of murder's rattles.

V.

And such they are—and such they will be found.

Not so Leonidas and Washington,
Whose every battle-field is holy ground,
Which breathes of nations saved, not worlds undone.

How sweetly on the ear such echoes sound !

While the mere victor's may appal or stun
The servile and the vain, such names will be
A watch-word, till the future shall be free.

VI.

The night was dark, and the thick mist allow'd

Nought to be seen save the artillery's flame,
Which arch'd the horizon like a fiery cloud,

And in the Danube's waters shone the same,
A mirror'd hell ! The volleying roar, and loud

Long booming of each peal on peal, o'ercame
The ear far more than thunder ; for heaven's flashes
Spare, or smite rarely—man's make millions ashes !

VII.

The column order'd on the assault scarce pass'd

Beyond the Russian batteries a few toises,
When up the bristling Moslem rose at last,

Answering the christian thunders with like voices ;
Then one vast fire, air, earth, and stream embraced,

Which rock'd as 't were beneath the mighty noises ;
While the whole rampart blazed like Etna, when
The restless Titan hiccups in his den.

VIII.

And one enormous shout of "Allah !" rose

In the same moment, loud as even the roar
Of war's most mortal engines, to their foes

Hurling defiance : city, stream, and shore
Resounded "Allah !" and the clouds which close

With thick'ning canopy the conflict o'er,
Vibrate to the Eternal name. Hark ! through
All sounds it pierceth, "Allah ! Allah ! Hu !"

IX.

The columns were in movement, one and all ;

But of the portion which attack'd by water,
Thicker than leaves the lives began to fall,

Though led by Arseniew, that great son of slaughter,
As brave as ever faced both bomb and ball.

"Carnage (so Wordsworth tells you) is God's daughter :"
If he speak truth, she is Christ's sister, and
Just now behaved as in the Holy Land.

X.

The Prince de Ligne was wounded in the knee;
 Count Chapeau-Bras too had a ball between
 His cap and head, which proves the head to be
 Aristocratic as was ever seen,
 Because it then received no injury
 More than the cap; in fact the ball could mean
 No harm unto a right legitimate head:
 "Ashes to ashes"—why not lead to lead?

XI.

Also the General Markow, brigadier,
 Insisting on removal of *the prince*,
 Amidst some groaning thousands dying near,—
 All common fellows, who might writhe and wince
 And shriek for water into a deaf ear,—
 The General Markow, who could thus evince
 His sympathy for rank, by the same token,
 To teach him greater, had his own leg broken.

XII.

Three hundred cannon threw up their emetic,
 And thirty thousand muskets flung their pills
 Like hail, to make a bloody diuretic.
 Mortality! thou hast thy monthly bills;
 Thy plagues, thy famines, thy physicians, yet tick,
 Like the death-watch, within our ears the ills
 Past, present, and to come;—but all may yield
 To the true portrait of one battle-field.

XIII.

There the still varying pangs, which multiply
 Until their very number makes men hard
 By the infinities of agony,
 Which meet the gaze, whate'er it may regard—
 The groan, the roll in dust, the all-white eye
 Turn'd back within its socket,—these reward
 Your rank and file by thousands, while the rest
 May win, perhaps, a ribbon at the breast!

XIV.

Yet I love glory; glory's a great thing;
 Think what it is to be in your old age
 Maintain'd at the expense of your good king:
 A moderate pension shakes full many a sage,
 And heroes are but made for bards to sing,
 Which is still better; thus in verse to wage
 Your wars eternally, besides enjoying
 Half-pay for life, make mankind worth destroying.

XV.

The troops, already disembark'd, push'd on
 To take a battery on the right ; the others,
 Who landed lower down, their landing done,
 Had set to work as briskly as their brothers :
 Being grenadiers, they mounted, one by one,
 Cheerful as children climb the breasts of mothers,—
 O'er the entrenchment and the palisade,
 Quite orderly, as if upon parade.

XVI.

And this was admirable ; for so hot
 The fire was, that were red Vesuvius loaded,
 Besides its lava, with all sorts of shot
 And shells, or hells, it could not more have goaded.
 Of officers a third fell on the spot,
 A thing which victory by no means boded
 To gentlemen engaged in the assault :
 Hounds, when the huntsman tumbles, are at fault.

XVII.

But here I leave the general concern,
 To track our hero on his path of fame :
 He must his laurels separately earn ;
 For fifty thousand heroes, name by name,
 Though all deserving equally to turn
 A couplet, or an elegy to claim,
 Would form a lengthy lexicon of glory.
 And, what is worse still, a much longer story :

XVIII.

And therefore we must give the greater number
 To the gazette—which doubtless fairly dealt
 By the deceased, who lie in famous slumber
 In ditches, fields, or wheresoe'er they felt
 Their clay for the last time their souls encumber ;—
 Thrice happy he whose name has been well spelt
 In the dispatch ; I knew a man whose loss
 Was printed *Grove*, although his name was Grose.³

XIX.

Juan and Johnson join'd a certain corps,
 And fought away with might and main, not knowing
 The way which they had never trod before,
 And still less guessing where they might be going ;
 But on they march'd, dead bodies trampling o'er,
 Firing, and thrusting, slashing, sweating, glowing,
 But fighting thoughtlessly enough to win
 To their *two* selves, *one* whole bright bulletin.

XX.

Thus on they wallow'd in the bloody mire
 Of dead and dying thousands,—sometimes gaining
 A yard or two of ground, which brought them nigher
 To some odd angle for which all were straining;
 At other times, repulsed by the close fire,
 Which really pour'd as if all hell were raining
 Instead of heaven, they stumbled backwards o'er
 A wounded comrade, sprawling in his gore.

XXI.

Though't was Don Juan's first of fields, and though
 The nightly muster and the silent march
 In the chill dark, when courage does not glow
 So much as under a triumphal arch,
 Perhaps might make him shiver, yawn, or throw
 A glance on the dull clouds (as thick as starch,
 Which stiffen'd heaven) as if he wish'd for day;—
 Yet for all this he did not run away.

XXII.

Indeed he could not. But what if he had?
 There *have been* and *are* heroes who begun
 With something not much better, or as bad:
 Frederick the Great from Molwitz deign'd to run
 For the first and last time; for, like a pad,
 Or hawk, or bride, most mortals, after one
 Warm bout, are broken into their new tricks,
 And fight like fiends for pay or politics.

XXIII.

He was what Erin calls, in her sublime
 Old Erse or Irish, or it may be *Punic*
 (The antiquarians who can settle time,
 Which settles all things, Roman, Greek, or Runie,
 Swear that Pat's language sprung from the same clime
 With Hannibal, and wears the Tyrian tunic
 Of Dido's alphabet; and this is rational
 As any other notion, and not national);— 4

XXIV.

But Juan was quite “a broth of a boy,”
 A thing of impulse and a child of song:
 Now swimming in the sentiment of joy,
 Or the *sensation* (if that phrase seem wrong),
 And afterwards, if he must needs destroy
 In such good company as always throng
 To battles, sieges, and that kind of pleasure,
 No less delighted to employ his leisure;

XXV.

But always without malice. If he warr'd
 Or loved, it was with what we call "the best
 Intentions," which form all mankind's *trump card*,
 To be produced when brought up to the test.
 The statesman, hero, harlot, lawyer—ward
 Off each attack when people are in quest
 Of their designs, by saying they *meant well*;
 'T is pity "that such meanings should pave hell." 5

XXVI.

I almost lately have begun to doubt
 Whether hell's pavement—if it be *so paved*—
 Must not have latterly been quite worn out,
 Not by the numbers good intent hath saved,
 But by the mass who go below without
 Those ancient good intentions, which once shaved
 And smooth'd the brimstone of that street of hell
 Which bears the greatest likeness to Pall-Mall.

XXVII.

Juan, by some strange chance, which oft divides
 Warrior from warrior in their grim career,
 Like chastest wives from constant husbands' sides,
 Just at the close of the first bridal year,
 By one of those odd turns of fortune's tides,
 Was on a sudden rather puzzled here,
 When, after a good deal of heavy firing,
 He found himself alone, and friends retiring.

XXVIII.

I don't know how the thing occur'd—it might
 Be that the greater part were kill'd or wounded,
 And that the rest had faced unto the right
 About ; a circumstance which has confounded
 Cæsar himself, who, in the very sight
 Of his whole army, which so much abounded
 In courage, was obliged to snatch a shield
 And rally back his Romans to the field.

XXIX.

Juan, who had no shield to snatch and was
 No Cæsar, but a fine young lad, who fought
 He knew not why, arriving at this pass,
 Stopp'd for a minute, as perhaps he ought
 For a much longer time ; then, like an ass—
 (Start not, kind reader ; since great Homer thought
 This simile enough for Ajax, Juan
 Perhaps may find it better than a new one)—

XXX.

Then, like an ass, he went upon his way,
 And, what was stranger, never look'd behind;
 But seeing, flashing forward, like the day
 Over the hills, a fire enough to blind
 Those who dislike to look upon a fray,
 He stumbled on, to try if he could find
 A path to add his own slight arm and forces
 To corps, the greater part of which were corses.

XXXI.

Perceiving then no more the commandant
 Of his own corps, nor even the corps, which had
 Quite disappear'd—the gods know how! (I can't
 Account for every thing which may look bad
 In history; but we at least may grant
 It was not marvellous that a mere lad,
 In search of glory, should look on before,
 Nor care a pinch of snuff about his corps:—)

XXXII.

Perceiving nor commander nor commanded,
 And left at large, like a young heir, to make
 His way to—where he knew not—single-handed;
 As travellers follow over bog and brake
 An “ignis fatuus,” or as sailors stranded
 Unto the nearest hut themselves betake,
 So Juan, following honour and his nose,
 Rush'd where the thickest fire announced most foes.

XXXIII.

He knew not where he was, nor greatly cared,
 For he was dizzy, busy, and his veins
 Fill'd as with lightning—for his spirit shared
 The hour, as is the case with lively brains;
 And where the hottest fire was seen and heard,
 And the loud cannon peal'd his hoarsest strains,
 He rush'd, while earth and air were sadly shaken
 By thy humane discovery, Friar Bacon!⁶

XXXIV.

And, as he rush'd along, it came to pass he
 Fell in with what was late the second column,
 Under the orders of the general Lascy,
 But now reduced, as is a bulky volume,
 Into an elegant extract (much less massy)
 Of heroism, and took his place with solemn
 Air, 'midst the rest, who kept their valiant faces,
 And levell'd weapons still against the glaci.

XXXV.

Just at this crisis up came Johnson too,
 Who had "retreated," as the phrase is when
 Men run away much rather than go through
 Destruction's jaws into the devil's den;
 But Johnson was a clever fellow, who
 Knew when and how "to cut and come again,"
 And never ran away, except when running
 Was nothing but a valorous kind of cunning.

XXXVI.

And so, when all his corps were dead or dying,
 Except Don Juan,—a mere novice, whose
 More virgin valour never dream'd of flying,
 From ignorance of danger, which induces
 Its votaries, like innocence relying
 On its own strength, with careless nerves and thews,—
 Johnson retired a little, just to rally
 Those who catch cold in "shadows of death's valley."

XXXVII.

And there, a little shelter'd from the shot,
 Which rain'd from bastion, battery, parapet,
 Rampart, wall, casement, house—for there was not
 In this extensive city, sore beset
 By christian soldiery, a single spot
 Which did not combat like the devil as yet,
 He found a number of chasseurs, all scatter'd
 By the resistance of the chase they batter'd.

XXXVIII.

And these he call'd on; and, what 's strange, they came
 Unto his call, unlike "the spirits from
 The vasty deep," to whom you may exclaim,
 Says Hotspur, long ere they will leave their home.
 Their reasons were uncertainty, or shame
 At shrinking from a bullet or a bomb,
 And that old impulse, which, in wars or creeds,
 Makes men, like cattle, follow him who leads.

XXXIX.

By Jove! he was a noble fellow Johnson,
 And though his name, than Ajax or Achilles,
 Sounds less harmonious, underneath the sun soon
 We shall not see his likeness: he could kill his
 Man quite as quietly as blows the monsoon
 Her steady breath (which some months the same *still is*);
 Seldom he varied feature, hue, or muscle,
 And could be very busy without bustle.

XL.

And therefore, when he ran away, he did so
 Upon reflection, knowing that behind
 He would find others who would fain be rid so
 Of idle apprehensions, which, like wind,
 Trouble heroic stomachs. Though their lids so
 Oft are soon closed, all heroes are not blind,
 But when they light upon immediate death,
 Retire a little, merely to take breath.

XLI.

But Johnson only ran off to return
 With many other warriors, as we said,
 Unto that rather somewhat misty bourn,
 Which Hamlet tells us is a pass of dread.
 To Jack, howe'er, this gave but slight concern :
 His soul (like galvanism upon the dead)
 Acted upon the living as on wire,
 And led them back into the heaviest fire.

XLII.

Egad ! they found the second time what they
 The first time thought quite terrible enough
 To fly from, *malgré* all which people say
 Of glory and all that immortal stuff
 Which fills a regiment (besides their pay,
 That daily shilling which makes warriors tough)—
 They found on their return the self-same welcome,
 Which made some *think*, and others *know*, a hell come.

XLIII.

They fell as thick as harvests beneath hail,
 Grass before scythes, or corn below the sickle,
 Proving that trite old truth, that life 's as frail
 As any other boon for which men stickle.
 The Turkish batteries thrash'd them like a flail,
 Or a good boxer, into a sad pickle
 Putting the very bravest, who were knock'd
 Upon the head, before their guns were cock'd.

XLIV.

The Turks, behind the traverses and flanks
 Of the next bastion, fired away like devils,
 And swept, as gales sweep foam away, whole ranks :
 However, Heaven knows how, the Fate who levels
 Towns, nations, worlds, in her revolving pranks,
 So order'd it, amidst these sulphury revels,
 That Johnson, and some few who had not scamper'd,
 Reach'd the interior talus of the rampart.

XLV.

First one or two, then five, six, and a dozen,
 Came mounting quickly up, for it was now
 All neck or nothing, as, like pitch or rosin,
 Flame was shower'd forth above as well 's below,
 So that you scarce could say who best had chosen,
 The gentlemen that were the first to show
 Their martial faces on the parapet,
 Or those who thought it brave to wait as yet.

XLVI.

But those who scaled, found out that their advance
 Was favour'd by an accident or blunder :
 The Greek or Turkish Cohorn's ignorance
 Had palisado'd in a way you 'd wonder
 To see in forts of Netherlands or France—
 (Though these to our Gibraltar must knock under)—
 Right in the middle of the parapet
 Just named, these palisades were primly set :

XLVII.

So that on either side some nine or ten
 Paces were left, whereon you could contrive
 To march ; a great convenience to our men,
 At least to all those who were left alive,
 Who thus could form a line and fight again ;
 And that which further aided them to strive
 Was, that they could kick down the palisades,
 Which scarcely rose much higher than grass blades.⁸

XLVIII.

Among the first,—I will not say the *first*,
 For such precedence upon such occasions
 Will oftentimes make deadly quarrels burst
 Out between friends as well as allied nations ;
 The Briton must be bold who really durst
 Put to such trial John Bull's partial patience,
 As say that Wellington at Waterloo
 Was beaten,—though the Prussians say so too ;—

XLIX.

And that if Blucher, Bulow, Gneisenau,
 And God knows who besides in “ au ” and “ ou,”
 Had not come up in time to cast an awe
 Into the hearts of those who fought till now
 As tigers combat with an empty craw,
 The Duke of Wellington had ceased to show
 His orders, also to receive his pensions,
 Which are the heaviest that our history mentions.

L.

But never mind ;—" God save the king ! " and kings !

For if *he* don't, I doubt if *men* will longer,—

I think I hear a little bird, who sings

The people by and by will be the stronger :

The veriest jade will wince whose harness wrings

So much into the raw as quite to wrong her

Beyond the rules of posting,—and the mob

At last fall sick of imitating Job.

LI.

At first it grumbles, then it swears, and then,

Like David, flings smooth pebbles 'gainst a giant ;

At last it takes to weapons, such as men

Snatch when despair makes human hearts less pliant.

Then " comes the tug of war ; "—'t will come again,

I rather doubt ; and I would fain say " fie on 't,"

If I had not perceived that revolution

Alone can save the earth from hell's pollution.

LII.

But to continue :—I say not *the* first,

But of the first, our little friend Don Juan

Walk'd o'er the walls of Ismail, as if nurst

Amidst such scenes—though this was quite a new one

To him, and I should hope to *most*. The thirst

Of glory, which so pierces through and through one,

Pervaded him—although a generous creature,

As warm in heart as feminine in feature.

LIII.

And here he was—who, upon woman's breast,

Even from a child, felt like a child ; how'er

The man in all the rest might be confest,

To him it was Elysium to be there ;

And he could even withstand that awkward test

Which Rousseau points out to the dubious fair,

" Observe your lover when he *leaves* your arms ; "

But Juan never left them, while they 'd charms,

LIV.

Unless compell'd by fate, or wave, or wind,

Or near relations, who are much the same.

But *here* he was !—where each tie that can bind

Humanity must yield to steel and flame :

And *he* whose very body was all mind,

Flung here by fate or circumstance, which tame

The loftiest, hurried by the time and place,

Dash'd on like a spurr'd blood-horse in a race.

LV.

So was his blood stirr'd while he found resistance,
 As is the hunter's at the five-bar gate,
 Or double post and rail, where the existence
 Of Britain's youth depends upon their weight,
 The lightest being the safest: at a distance
 He hated cruelty, as all men hate
 Blood, until heated—and even then his own
 At times would curdle o'er some heavy groan.

LVI.

The General Lascy, who had been hard press'd,
 Seeing arrive an aid so opportune
 As were some hundred youngsters all abreast,
 Who came as if just dropp'd down from the moon,
 To Juan, who was nearest him, address'd
 His thanks, and hopes to take the city soon,
 Not reckoning him to be a "base Bezonian"
 (As Pistol calls it), but a young Livonian.

LVII.

Juan, to whom he spoke in German, knew
 As much of German as of Sanscrit, and
 In answer made an inclination to
 The general who held him in command;
 For, seeing one with ribbons, black and blue,
 Stars, medals, and a bloody sword in hand,
 Addressing him in tones which seem'd to thank,
 He recognized an officer of rank.

LVIII.

Short speeches pass between two men who speak
 No common language; and besides, in time
 Of war and taking towns, when many a shriek
 Rings o'er the dialogue, and many a crime
 Is perpetrated ere a word can break
 Upon the ear, and sounds of horror chime
 In, like church-bells, with sigh, howl, groan, yell, prayer,
 There cannot be much conversation there.

LIX.

And therefore all we have related in
 Two long octaves, pass'd in a little minute;
 But in the same small minute, every sin
 Contrived to get itself comprised within it.
 The very cannon, deafen'd by the din,
 Grew dumb, for you might almost hear a linnet,
 As soon as thunder, 'midst the general noise
 Of human nature's agonizing voice!

LX.

The town was enter'd. Oh eternity!—
 "God made the country, and man made the town,"
 So Cowper says—and I begin to be
 Of his opinion, when I see cast down
 Rome, Babylon, Tyre, Carthage, Nineveh—
 All walls men know, and many never known;
 And pondering on the present and the past,
 To deem the woods shall be our home at last.

LXI.

Of all men, saving Sylla the manslayer,
 Who passes for in life and death most lucky,
 Of the great names which in our faces stare,
 The General Boon, back-woodsman of Kentucky,
 Was happiest amongst mortals any where:
 For, killing nothing but a bear or buck, he
 Enjoy'd the lonely, vigorous, harmless days
 Of his old age in wilds of deepest maze.

LXII.

Crime came not near him—she is not the child
 Of solitude; health shrank not from him—for
 Her home is in the rarely-trodden wild,
 Where if men seek her not, and death be more
 Their choice than life, forgive them, as beguiled
 By habit to what their own hearts abhor—
 In cities caged. The present case in point I
 Cite is, that Boon lived hunting up to ninety;

LXIII.

And what's still stranger, left behind a name
 For which men vainly decimate the throng,—
 Not only famous, but of that *good* fame,
 Without which glory's but a tavern song—
 Simple, serene, the antipodes of shame,
 Which hate nor envy e'er could tinge with wrong;
 An active hermit, even in age the child
 Of nature, or the Man of Ross run wild.

LXIV.

'T is true he shrank from men, even of his nation;
 When they built up unto his darling trees,
 He moved some hundred miles off, for a station
 Where there were fewer houses and more ease—
 The inconvenience of civilization
 Is, that you neither can be pleased nor please;—
 But where he met the individual man,
 He show'd himself as kind as mortal can.

LXV.

He was not all alone : around him grew
 A sylvan tribe of children of the chase,
 Whose young, unwaken'd world was ever new,
 Nor sword nor sorrow yet had left a trace
 On her unwrinkled brow, nor could you view
 A frown on nature's or on human face ;
 The free-born forest found and kept them free,
 And fresh as is a torrent or a tree.

LXVI.

And tall and strong and swift of foot were they,
 Beyond the dwarfing city's pale abortions,
 Because their thoughts had never been the prey
 Of care or gain : the green woods were their portions ;
 No sinking spirits told them they grew grey ;
 No fashion made them apes of her distortions ;
 Simple they were, not savage ; and their rifles,
 Though very true, were not yet used for trifles.

LXVII.

Motion was in their days, rest in their slumbers,
 And cheerfulness the handmaid of their toil ;
 Nor yet too many nor too few their numbers ;
 Corruption could not make their hearts her soil :
 The lust which stings, the splendour which encumbers,
 With the free foresters divide no spoil ;
 Serene, not sullen, were the solitudes
 Of this unsighing people of the woods.

LXVIII.

So much for nature :—by way of variety,
 Now back to thy great joys, civilisation !
 And the sweet consequence of large society,—
 War, pestilence, the despot's desolation,
 The kingly scourge, the lust of notoriety,
 The millions slain by soldiers for their ration,
 The scenes like Catharine's boudoir at threescore,
 With Ismail's storm to soften it the more.

LXIX.

The town was enter'd : first one column made
 Its sanguinary way good—then another ;
 The reeking bayonet and the flashing blade
 Clash'd 'gainst the scimitar, and babe and mother
 With distant shrieks were heard heaven to upbraid ;—
 Still closer sulphury clouds began to smother
 The breath of morn and man, where, foot by foot,
 The madden'd Turks their city still dispute.

LXX.

Koutousow, he who afterwards beat back
 (With some assistance from the frost and snow)
 Napoleon on his bold and bloody track,
 It happen'd was himself beat back just now.
 He was a jolly fellow, and could crack
 His jest alike in face of friend or foe,
 Though life, and death, and victory were at stake—
 But here it seem'd his jokes had ceased to take.

LXXI.

For having thrown himself into a ditch,
 Follow'd in haste by various grenadiers,
 Whose blood the puddle greatly did enrich,
 He climb'd to where the parapet appears;
 But there his project reach'd its utmost pitch—
 ('Mongst other deaths the General Ribaupierre's
 Was much regretted)—for the Moslem men
 Threw them all down into the ditch again :

LXXII.

And had it not been for some stray troops, landing
 They knew not where,—being carried by the stream
 To some spot, where they lost their understanding,
 And wander'd up and down as in a dream,
 Until they reach'd, as day-break was expanding,
 That which a portal to their eyes did seem,—
 The great and gay Koutousow might have lain
 Where three parts of his column yet remain.

LXXIII.

And scrambling round the rampart, these same troops,
 After the taking of the "cavalier,"
 Just as Koutousow's most "forlorn" of "hopes"
 Took, like cameleons, some slight tinge of fear,
 Open'd the gate call'd "Kilia" to the groups
 Of baffled heroes who stood shyly near,
 Sliding knee-deep in lately-frozen mud,
 Now thaw'd into a marsh of human blood.

LXXIV.

The Kozacks, or if so you please, Cossacks—
 (I don't much pique myself upon orthography,
 So that I do not grossly err in facts,
 Statistics, tactics, politics, and geography)—
 Having been used to serve on horses' backs,
 And no great dilettanti in topography
 Of fortresses, but fighting where it pleases
 Their chiefs to order,—were all cut to pieces.

LXXV.

Their column, though the Turkish batteries thunder'd
 Upon them, ne'ertheless had reach'd the rampart,
 And naturally thought they could have plunder'd
 The city, without being further hamper'd ;
 But, as it happens to brave men, they blunder'd—
 The Turks at first pretended to have scamper'd
 Only to draw them 'twixt two bastion corners,
 From whence they sallied on those christian scorers.

LXXVI.

Then being taken by the tail—a taking
 Fatal to bishops as to soldiers—these
 Cossacks were all cut off as day was breaking,
 And found their lives were let at a short lease—
 But perish'd without shivering or shaking,
 Leaving as ladders their heap'd carcasses,
 O'er which Lieutenant-Colonel Yesouskoi
 March'd with the brave battalion of Polouzki :—

LXXVII.

This valiant man kill'd all the Turks he met,
 But could not eat them, being in his turn
 Slain by some Mussulmans, who would not yet,
 Without resistance, see their city burn.
 The walls were won, but 't was an even bet
 Which of the armies would have cause to mourn :
 'T was blow for blow, disputing inch by inch,
 For one would not retreat, nor t' other flinch.

LXXVIII.

Another column also suffer'd much :
 And here we may remark with the historian,
 You should but give few cartridges to such
 Troops as are meant to march with greatest glory on:
 When matters must be carried by the touch
 Of the bright bayonet, and they all should hurry on,
 They sometimes, with a hankering for existence,
 Keep merely firing at a foolish distance.

LXXIX.

A junction of the General Meknop's men
 (Without the general, who had fallen some time
 Before, being badly seconded just then)
 Was made at length with those who dared to climb
 The death-disgorging rampart once again ;
 And, though the Turk's resistance was sublime,
 They took the bastion, which the seraskier
 Defended at a price extremely dear.

LXXX.

Juan and Johnson, and some volunteers,
 Among the foremost, offer'd him good quarter,
 A word which little suits with seraskiers,
 Or at least suited not this valiant Tartar.—
 He died, deserving well his country's tears,
 A savage sort of military martyr.
 An English naval officer, who wish'd
 To make him prisoner, was also dish'd :

LXXXI.

For all the answer to his proposition
 Was from a pistol-shot that laid him dead ;
 On which the rest, without more intermission,
 Began to lay about with steel and lead,—
 The pious metals most in requisition
 On such occasions : not a single head
 Was spared,—three thousand Moslems perish'd here,
 And sixteen bayonets pierced the seraskier.

LXXXII.

The city 's taken—only part by part—
 And death is drunk with gore : there 's not a street
 Where fights not to the last some desperate heart
 For those for whom it soon shall cease to beat.
 Here War forgot his own destructive art
 In more destroying nature ; and the heat
 Of carnage, like the Nile's sun-sodden slime,
 Engender'd monstrous shapes of every crime.

LXXXIII.

A Russian officer, in martial tread
 Over a heap of bodies, felt his heel
 Seized fast, as if 't were by the serpent's head,
 Whose fangs Eve taught her human seed to feel.
 In vain he kick'd, and swore, and writhed, and bled,
 And howl'd for help as wolves do for a meal—
 The teeth still kept their gratifying hold,
 As do the subtle snakes described of old.

LXXXIV.

A dying Moslem, who had felt the foot
 Of a foe o'er him, snatch'd at it, and bit
 The very tendon which is most acute—
 (That which some ancient muse or modern wit
 Named after thee, Achilles) and quite through 't
 He made the teeth meet, nor relinquish'd it
 Even with his life—for (but they lie) 't is said
 To the live leg still clung the sever'd head.

LXXXV.

However this may be, 't is pretty sure
 The Russian officer for life was lamed,
 For the Turk's teeth stuck faster than a skewer,
 And left him 'midst the invalid and maim'd :
 The regimental surgeon could not cure
 His patient, and perhaps was to be blamed
 More than the head of the inveterate foe,
 Which was cut off, and scarce even then let go.

LXXXVI.

But then the fact 's a fact—and 't is the part
 Of a true poet to escape from fiction
 Whene'er he can ; for there is little art
 In leaving verse more free from the restriction
 Of truth than prose, unless to suit the mart
 For what is sometimes call'd poetic diction,
 And that outrageous appetite for lies
 Which Satan angles with for souls like flies.

LXXXVII.

The city 's taken, but not render'd!—No !
 There 's not a Moslem that hath yielded sword :
 The blood may gush out, as the Danube's flow
 Rolls by the city wall ; but deed nor word
 Acknowledge aught of dread of death, or foe :
 In vain the yell of victory is roar'd
 By the advancing Muscovite—the groan
 Of the last foe is echoed by his own.

LXXXVIII.

The bayonet pierces and the sabre cleaves,
 And human lives are lavish'd every where,
 As the year closing whirls the scarlet leaves
 When the stripp'd forest bows to the bleak air,
 And groans ; and thus the peopled city grieves,
 Shorn of its best and loveliest, and left bare ;
 But still it falls with vast and awful splinters,
 As oaks blown down with all their thousand winters.

LXXXIX.

It is an awful topic—but 't is not
 My cue for any time to be terrific :
 For, chequer'd as is seen our human lot
 With good, and bad, and worse, alike prolific
 Of melancholy merriment, to quote
 Too much of one sort would be soporific ;—
 Without, or with, offence to friends or foes,
 I sketch your world exactly as it goes.

XC.

And one good action in the midst of crimes
 Is "quite refreshing"—in the affected phrase
 Of these ambrosial pharisaic times,
 With all their pretty milk-and-water ways,—
 And may serve therefore to bedew these rhymes,
 A little scorch'd at present with the blaze
 Of conquest and its consequences, which
 Make epic poesy so rare and rich.

XCI.

Upon a taken bastion, where there lay
 Thousands of slaughter'd men, a yet warm group
 Of murder'd women, who had found their way
 To this vain refuge, made the good heart droop
 And shudder ;—while, as beautiful as May,
 A female child of ten years tried to stoop
 And hide her little palpitating breast
 Amidst the bodies lull'd in bloody rest.

XCII.

Two villanous Cossacks pursued the child
 With flashing eyes and weapons : match'd with them,
 The rudest brute that roams Siberia's wild,
 Has feelings pure and polish'd as a gem,—
 The bear is civilized, the wolf is mild ;
 And whom for this at last must we condemn ?
 Their natures, or their sovereigns, who employ
 All arts to teach their subjects to destroy ?

XCIII.

Their sabres glitter'd o'er her little head,
 Whence her fair hair rose twining with affright,
 Her hidden face was plunged amidst the dead :
 When Juan caught a glimpse of this sad sight,
 I shall not say exactly what he *said*,
 Because it might not solace "ears polite ;"
 But what he *did*, was to lay on their backs,—
 The readiest way of reasoning with Cossacks.

XCIV.

One's hip he slash'd, and split the other's shoulder,
 And drove them with their brutal yells to seek
 If there might be chirurgeons who could solder
 The wounds they richly merited, and shriek
 Their baffled rage and pain ; while waxing colder
 As he turn'd o'er each pale and gory cheek,
 Don Juan raised his little captive from
 The heap a moment more had made her tomb.

XCV.

And she was chill as they, and on her face
 A slender streak of blood announced how near
 Her fate had been to that of all her race ;
 For the same blow which laid her mother here,
 Had scarr'd her brow, and left its crimson trace
 As the last link with all she had held dear ;
 But else unhurt, she open'd her large eyes,
 And gazed on Juan with a wild surprise.

XCVI.

Just at this instant, while their eyes were fix'd
 Upon each other, with dilated glance,
 In Juan's look, pain, pleasure, hope, fear, mix'd
 With joy to save, and dread of some mischance
 Unto his protégée ; while hers, transfix'd
 With infant terrors, glared as from a trance,
 A pure, transparent, pale, yet radiant face,
 Like to a lighted alabaster vase ;—

XCVII.

Up came John Johnson—(I will not say “Jack,”
 For that were vulgar, cold, and common-place
 On great occasions, such as an attack
 On cities, as hath been the present case)—
 Up Johnson came, with hundreds at his back,
 Exclaiming :—“ Juan ! Juan ! On, boy ! brace
 Your arm, and I 'll bet Moscow to a dollar,
 That you and I will win Saint George's collar.”¹⁰

XCVIII.

“ The seraskier is knock'd upon the head,
 But the stone bastion still remains, wherein
 The old pacha sits among some hundreds dead,
 Smoking his pipe quite calmly 'midst the din
 Of our artillery and his own, 't is said :
 Our kill'd, already piled up to the chin,
 Lie round the battery ; but still it batters,
 And grape in volleys, like a vineyard, scatters.

XCIX.

“ Then up with me !”—But Juan answer'd, “ Look
 Upon this child—I saved her—must not leave
 Her life to chance ; but point me out some nook
 Of safety, where she less may shrink and grieve,
 And I am with you.”—Whereon Johnson took
 A glance around—and shrugg'd—and twitch'd his sleeve
 And black silk neckcloth—and replied, “ You 're right ;
 Poor thing ! what 's to be done ? I 'm puzzled quite.”

C.

Said Juan—"Whatsoever is to be
Done, I 'll not quit her till she seems secure
Of present life a good deal more than we."—

Quoth Johnson—"Neither will I quite ensure ;
But at the least *you* may die gloriously."

Juan replied—"At least I will endure
Whate'er is to be borne—but not resign
This child, who is parentless, and therefore mine."

CI.

Johnson said—"Juan, we 've no time to lose ;

The child 's a pretty child—a very pretty—
I never saw such eyes—but hark ! now chuse

Between your fame and feelings, pride and pity :
Hark ! how the roar increases !—no excuse

Will serve when there is plunder in a city ;—
I should be loth to march without you, but,
By God ! we 'll be too late for the first cut."

CII.

But Juan was immovable ; until

Johnson, who really loved him in his way,
Pick'd out amongst his followers with some skill

Such as he thought the least given up to prey ;
And swearing if the infant came to ill

That they should all be shot on the next day,
But if she were deliver'd safe and sound,
They should at least have fifty roubles round,

CIII.

And all allowances besides of plunder

In fair proportion with their comrades ;—then
Juan consented to march on through thunder,

Which thinn'd at every step their ranks of men :
And yet the rest rush'd eagerly—no wonder,

For they were heated by the hope of gain,
A thing which happens every where each day—
No hero trusteth wholly to half-pay.

CIV.

And such is victory, and such is man !

At least nine-tenths of what we call so ;—God
May have another name for half we scan

As human beings, or his ways are odd.
But to our subject. A brave Tartar khan,—

Or "*sultan*," as the author (to whose nod
In prose I bend my humble verse) doth call
This chieftain—somehow would not yield at all :

CV.

But flank'd by *five* brave sons (such is polygamy,
 That she spawns warriors by the score, where none
 Are prosecuted for that false crime bigamy),
 He never would believe the city won
 While courage clung but to a single twig.—Am I
 Describing Priam's, Peleus', or Jove's son?
 Neither,—but a good, plain, old, temperate man,
 Who fought with his five children in the van.

CVI.

To *take* him was the point. The truly brave,
 When they behold the brave oppress'd with odds,
 Are touch'd with a desire to shield and save ;—
 A mixture of wild beasts and demi-gods
 Are they—now furious as the sweeping wave,
 Now moved with pity : even as sometimes nods
 The rugged tree unto the summer wind,
 Compassion breathes along the savage mind.

CVII.

But he would *not* be *taken*, and replied
 To all the propositions of surrender
 By mowing christians down on every side,
 As obstinate as Swedish Charles at Bender.
 His five brave boys no less the foe defied :
 Whereon the Russian pathos grew less tender,
 As being a virtue, like terrestrial patience,
 Apt to wear out on trifling provocations.

CVIII.

And spite of Johnson and of Juan, who
 Expended all their eastern phraseology
 In begging him, for God's sake, just to show
 So much less fight as might form an apology
 For *them* in saving such a desperate foe—
 He hew'd away, like doctors of theology
 When they dispute with sceptics ; and with curses
 Struck at his friends, as babies beat their nurses.

CIX.

Nay, he had wounded, though but slightly, both
 Juan and Johnson, whereupon they fell—
 The first with sighs, the second with an oath—
 Upon his angry sultanship, pell-mell,
 And all around were grown exceeding wroth
 At such a pertinacious infidel,
 And pour'd upon him and his sons like rain,
 Which they resisted like a sandy plain

CX.

That drinks and still is dry. At last they perish'd:—

His second son was levell'd by a shot ;
His third was sabred ; and the fourth, most cherish'd
Of all the five, on bayonets met his lot ;
The fifth, who, by a christian mother nourish'd,
Had been neglected, ill-used, and what not,
Because deform'd, yet died all game and bottom,
To save a sire who blush'd that he begot him.

CXI.

The eldest was a true and tameless Tartar,
As great a scorner of the Nazarene
As ever Mahomet pick'd out for a martyr,
Who only saw the black-eyed girls in green,
Who make the beds of those who won't take quarter
On earth, in Paradise ; and, when once seen,
Those houris, like all other pretty creatures,
Do just whate'er they please, by dint of features.

CXII.

And what they pleased to do with the young khan
In heaven, I know not, nor pretend to guess ;
But doubtless they prefer a fine young man
To tough old heroes, and can do no less ;
And that 's the cause, no doubt, why, if we scan
A field of battle's ghastly wilderness,
For one rough, weather-beaten, veteran body,
You 'll find ten thousand handsome coxcombs bloody.

CXIII.

Your houris also have a natural pleasure
In lopping off your lately married men
Before the bridal hours have danced their measure,
And the sad second moon grows dim again,
Or dull repentance hath had dreary leisure
To wish him back a bachelor now and then.
And thus your houri (it may be) disputes
Of these brief blossoms the immediate fruits.

CXIV.

Thus the young khan, with houris in his sight,
Thought not upon the charms of four young brides,
But bravely rush'd on his first heavenly night.
In short, howe'er *our* better faith derides,
These black-eyed virgins make the Moslems fight,
As though there were one heaven and none besides,—
Whereas, if all be true we hear of heaven
And hell, there must at least be six or seven.

CXV.

So fully flash'd the phantom on his eyes,
 That when the very lance was in his heart,
 He shouted "Allah!" and saw Paradise
 With all its veil of mystery drawn apart,
 And bright eternity without disguise
 On his soul, like a ceaseless sunrise, dart,—
 With prophets, houris, angels, saints descried
 In one voluptuous blaze,—and then he died:

CXVI.

But, with a heavenly rapture on his face,
 The good old khan—who long had ceased to see
 Houris, or aught except his florid race,
 Who grew like cedars round him gloriously—
 When he beheld his latest hero grace
 The earth, which he became like a fell'd tree,
 Paused for a moment from the fight, and cast
 A glance on that slain son, his first and last.

CXVII.

The soldiers, who beheld him drop his point,
 Stopp'd as if once more willing to concede
 Quarter, in case he bade them not "aroint!"
 As he before had done. He did not heed
 Their pause nor signs: his heart was out of joint,
 And shook (till now unshaken) like a reed,
 As he look'd down upon his children gone,
 And felt—though done with life—he was alone.

CXVIII.

But 't was a transient tremor:—with a spring
 Upon the Russian steel his breast he flung,
 As carelessly as hurls the moth her wing
 Against the light wherein she dies: he clung
 Closer, that all the deadlier they might wring,
 Unto the bayonets which had pierced his young;
 And, throwing back a dim look on his sons,
 In one wide wound pour'd forth his soul at once.

CXIX.

'T is strange enough—the rough, tough soldiers, who
 Spared neither sex nor age in their career
 Of carnage, when this old man was pierced through,
 And lay before them with his children near,
 Touch'd by the heroism of him they slew,
 Were melted for a moment; though no tear
 Flow'd from their blood-shot eyes, all red with strife,
 They honour'd such determined scorn of life.

CXX.

But the stone bastion still kept up its fire,
 Where the chief pacha calmly held his post :
 Some twenty times he made the Russ retire,
 And baffled the assaults of all their host ;
 At length he condescended to inquire
 If yet the city's rest were won or lost ;
 And, being told the latter, sent a bey
 To answer Ribas' summons to give way.

CXXI.

In the mean time, cross-legg'd, with great *sang-froid*,
 Among the scorching ruins he sat smoking
 Tobacco on a little carpet ;—Troy
 Saw nothing like the scene around ;—yet, looking
 With martial stoicism, nought seem'd to annoy
 His stern philosophy : but gently stroking
 His beard, he puff'd his pipe's ambrosial gales,
 As if he had three lives as well as tails.

CXXII.

The town was taken—whether he might yield
 Himself or bastion, little matter'd now :
 His stubborn valour was no future shield.
 Ismail 's no more ! The crescent's silver bow
 Sunk, and the crimson cross glared o'er the field,
 But red with no *redeeming* gore : the glow
 Of burning streets, like moonlight on the water,
 Was imaged back in blood, the sea of slaughter.

CXXIII.

All that the mind would shrink from of excesses ;
 All that the body perpetrates of bad ;
 All that we read, hear, dream, of man's distresses ;
 All that the devil would do if run stark mad ;
 All that defies the worst which pen expresses ;
 All by which hell is peopled, or as sad
 As hell—mere mortals who their power abuse,—
 Was here (as heretofore and since) let loose.

CXXIV.

If here and there some transient trait of pity
 Was shown, and some more noble heart broke through
 Its bloody bond, and saved perhaps some pretty
 Child, or an aged helpless man or two—
 What 's this in one annihilated city,
 Where thousand loves, and ties, and duties grow ?
 Cockneys of London ! Muscadins of Paris !
 Just ponder what a pious pastime war is.

CXXV.

Think how the joys of reading a gazette
 Are purchased by all agonies and crimes :
 Or, if these do not move you, don't forget
 Such doom may be your own in after times.
 Meantime the taxes, Castlereagh, and debt,
 Are hints as good as sermons, or as rhymes.
 Read your own hearts and Ireland's present-story,
 Then feed her famine fat with Wellesley's glory.

CXXVI.

But still there is unto a patriot nation,
 Which loves so well its country and its king,
 A subject of sublimest exultation—
 Bear it, ye Muses, on your brightest wing !
 Howe'er the mighty locust, Desolation,
 Strip your green fields, and to your harvests cling,
 Gaunt Famine never shall approach the throne—
 Though Ireland starve, great George weighs twenty stone.

CXXVII.

But let me put an end unto my theme :
 There was an end of Ismail—hapless town !
 Far flash'd her burning towers o'er Danube's stream,
 And redly ran his blushing waters down.
 The horrid war-whoop and the shriller scream
 Rose still ; but fainter were the thunders grown
 Of forty thousand who had mann'd the wall,
 Some hundreds breathed—the rest were silent all !

CXXVIII.

In one thing ne'ertheless 't is fit to praise
 The Russian army upon this occasion,
 A virtue much in fashion now-a-days,
 And therefore worthy of commemoration :
 The topic's tender, so shall be my phrase—
 Perhaps the season's chill, and their long station
 In winter's depth, or want of rest and victual,
 Had made them chaste—they ravish'd very little.

CXXIX.

Much did they slay, more plunder, and no less
 Might here and there occur some violation
 In the other line ;—but not to such excess
 As when the French, that dissipated nation,
 Take towns by storm : no causes can I guess,
 Except cold weather and commiseration ;
 But all the ladies, save some twenty score,
 Were almost as much virgins as before.

CXXX.

Some odd mistakes too happen'd in the dark,
 Which show'd a want of lanthorns, or of taste—
 Indeed the smoke was such they scarce could mark
 Their friends from foes,—besides such things from haste
 Occur, though rarely, when there is a spark
 Of light to save the venerably chaste :—
 But six old damsels, each of seventy years,
 Were all deflower'd by different grenadiers.

CXXXI.

But on the whole their continence was great ;
 So that some disappointment there ensued
 To those who had felt the inconvenient state
 Of “single blessedness,” and thought it good
 (Since it was not their fault, but only fate,
 To bear these crosses) for each waning prude
 To make a Roman sort of Sabine wedding,
 Without the expense and the suspense of bedding.

CXXXII.

Some voices of the buxom middle-aged
 Were also heard to wonder in the din
 (Widows of forty were these birds long caged)
 “Wherefore the ravishing did not begin !”
 But, while the thirst for gore and plunder raged,
 There was small leisure for superfluous sin ;
 But whether they escaped or no, lies hid
 In darkness—I can only hope they did.

CXXXIII.

Suwarrow now was conqueror—a match
 For Timour or for Zinghis in his trade.
 While mosques and streets, beneath his eyes, like thatch
 Blazed, and the cannon's roar was scarce allay'd,
 With bloody hands he wrote his first dispatch ;
 And here exactly follows what he said :—
 “Glory to *God* and to the Empress !” (*Powers*
Eternal ! such names mingled !) “Ismail's ours !”¹¹

CXXXIV.

Methinks these are the most tremendous words,
 Since “Menè, Menè, Tekel,” and “Upharsin,”
 Which hands or pens have ever traced of swords.
 Heaven help me ! I'm but little of a parson :
 What Daniel read was short-hand of the Lord's,
 Severe, sublime ; the prophet wrote no farce on
 The fate of nations ;—but this Russ, so witty,
 Could rhyme, like Nero, o'er a burning city.

CXXXV.

He wrote this polar melody, and set it,
 Duly accompanied by shrieks and groans,
 Which few will sing, I trust, but none forget it—
 For I will teach, if possible, the stones
 To rise against earth's tyrants. Never let it
 Be said, that we still truckle unto thrones:—
 But ye—our children's children! think how we
 Show'd *what things were* before the world was free!

CXXXVI.

That hour is not for us, but 't is for you,
 And as, in the great joy of your millennium,
 You hardly will believe such things were true
 As now occur, I thought that I would pen you 'em;
 But may their very memory perish too!—
 Yet, if perchance remember'd, still disdain you 'em,
 More than you scorn the savages of yore,
 Who *painted* their *bare* limbs, but *not* with gore.

CXXXVII.

And when you hear historians talk of thrones,
 And those that sate upon them, let it be
 As we now gaze upon the mammoth's bones,
 And wonder what old world such things could see;
 Or hieroglyphics on Egyptian stones,
 The pleasant riddles of futurity—
 Guessing at what shall happily be hid,
 As the real purpose of a pyramid.

CXXXVIII.

Reader! I have kept my word,—at least so far
 As the first canto promised. You have now
 Had sketches of love, tempest, travel, war—
 All very accurate, you must allow,
 And *epic*, if plain truth should prove no bar;
 For I have drawn much less with a long bow
 Than my fore-runners. Carelessly I sing,
 But Phœbus lends me now and then a string,

CXXXIX.

With which I still can harp, and carp, and fiddle.
 What further hath befallen or may befall
 The hero of this grand poetic riddle,
 I by and by may tell you, if at all:
 But now I choose to break off in the middle,
 Worn out with battering Ismail's stubborn wall,
 While Juan is sent off with the despatch,
 For which all Petersburg is on the watch.

CXL.

This special honour was conferr'd, because
 He had behav'd with courage and humanity ;—
 Which *last* men like, when they have time to pause
 From their ferocities produced by vanity.
 His little captive gain'd him some applause,
 For saving her amidst the wild insanity
 Of carnage, and I think he was more glad in her
 Safety, than his new order of Saint Vladimir.

CXLI.

The Moslem orphan went with her protector,
 For she was homeless, houseless, helpless : all
 Her friends, like the sad family of Hector,
 Had perish'd in the field or by the wall :
 Her very place of birth was but a spectre
 Of what it had been ; there the Muezzin's call
 To prayer was heard no more !—and Juan wept,
 And made a vow to shield her, which he kept.

NOTES TO CANTO VIII.

Note 1. Stanza viii.

"Allah! Hu!" is properly the war-cry of the Mussulmans, and they dwell long on the last syllable, which gives it a very wild and peculiar effect.

Note 2. Stanza ix.

But *thy* most dreaded instrument
In working out a pure intent,
Is man array'd for mutual slaughter,
Yea, *Carnage is thy daughter!*

WORDSWORTH'S *Thanksgiving Ode*:

To wit, the Deity's. This is perhaps as pretty a pedigree for Murder as ever was found out by Garter King-at-arms.—What would have been said, had any free spoken people discovered such a lineage?

Note 3. Stanza xviii.

A fact; see the Waterloo Gazettes. I recollect remarking at the time to a friend: "*There is fame!* a man is killed, his name is Grose, and they print it Grove." I was at college with the deceased, who was a very amiable and clever man, and his society in great request for his wit, gaiety, and "*chansons à boire.*"

Note 4. Stanza xxiii.

See Major Valancey and Sir Lawrence Parsons.

Note 5. Stanza xxv.

The Portuguese proverb says, that "Hell is paved with good intentions."

Note 6. Stanza xxxiii.

Gunpowder is said to have been discovered by this friar. [N.B. Though Friar Bacon seems to have discovered gunpowder, he had the *humanity* not to record his discovery in intelligible language.—E.]

Note 7. Stanza xxxviii.

Glendower. "I can call spirits from the vasty deep."

Hotspur. Why so can I, or so can any man:

But will they come when you do call for them?"—*Henry IV.*

Note 8. Stanza xlvii.

They were but two feet high above the level.

Note 9. Stanza xciii.

"But never mention hell to ears polite."—POPE.

Note 10. Stanza xcvii.

A Russian military order.

Note 11. Stanza cxxxiii.

In the original Russian—

"Slava bogu! slava vam!"

Krepost Vzala, ya tam."

A kind of couplet; for he was a poet.

CANTO IX.

I.

OH, Wellington! (or "Vilainton"—for fame
 Sounds the heroic syllables both ways;
 France could not even conquer your great name,
 But punn'd it down to this facetious phrase—
 Beating or beaten she will laugh the same)—
 You have obtain'd great pensions and much praise;
 Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,
 Humanity would rise, and thunder "Nay!" :

II.

I don't think that you used Kinnaird's quite well
 In Marinet's affair—in fact 't was shabby,
 And like some other things, won't do to tell
 Upon your tomb in Westminster's old abbey.
 Upon the rest 't is not worth while to dwell,
 Such tales being for the tea hours of some tabby;
 But though your years as *man* tend fast to zero,
 In fact your Grace is still but a *young hero*.

III.

Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so much,
 Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly more:
 You have repair'd legitimacy's crutch—
 A prop not quite so certain as before:
 The Spanish, and the French, as well as Dutch,
 Have seen, and felt, how strongly you *restore*;
 And Waterloo has made the world your debtor
 (I wish your bards would sing it rather better).

IV.

You are "the best of cut-throats:"—do not start;
 The phrase is Shakspeare's, and not misapplied.
 War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art,
 Unless her cause by right be sanctified.
 If you have acted *once* a generous part,
 The world, not the world's masters, will decide,
 And I shall be delighted to learn who,
 Save you and yours, have gain'd by Waterloo?

V.

I am no flatterer—you've supp'd full of flattery :
 They say you like it too—'t is no great wonder ;
 He whose whole life has been assault and battery,
 At last may get a little tired of thunder ;
 And, swallowing eulogy much more than satire, he
 May like being praised for every lucky blunder,
 Call'd "Saviour of the Nations"—not yet saved,
 And "Europe's Liberator"—still enslaved.

VI.

I've done. Now go and dine from off the plate—
 Presented by the Prince of the Brazils,
 And send the sentinel before your gate
 A slice or two from your luxurious meals :⁵
 He fought, but has not fed so well of late.
 Some hunger too they say the people feels :
 There is no doubt that you deserve your ration,
 But pray give back a little to the nation.

VII.

I don't mean to reflect—a man so great as
 You, my Lord Duke ! is far above reflection.
 The high Roman fashion too of Cincinnatus
 With modern history has but small connexion :
 Though as an Irishman you love potatoes,
 You need not take them under your direction ;
 And half a million for your Sabine farm—
 Is rather dear !—I'm sure I mean no harm.

VIII.

Great men have always scorn'd great recompenses ;
 Epaminondas saved his Thebes, and died,
 Not leaving even his funeral expenses :
 George Washington had thanks and nought beside,
 Except the all-cloudless glory (which few men's is)
 To free his country : Pitt too had his pride,
 And, as a high-soul'd minister of state, is
 Renown'd for ruining Great Britain gratis.

IX.

Never had mortal man such opportunity,
 Except Napoleon, or abused it more.
 You might have freed fall'n Europe from the unity
 Of tyrants, and been bless'd from shore to shore ;
 And now—what is your fame ? Shall the muse tune it ye ?
 Now—that the rabble's first vain shouts are o'er ?
 Go ! hear it in your famish'd country's cries !
 Behold the world ! and curse your victories !

X.

As these new cantos touch on warlike feats,
 To *you* the unflattering muse deigns to inscribe
 Truths that you will not read in the gazettes,
 But which 't is time to teach the hireling tribe
 Who fatten on their country's gore and debts,
 Must be recited, and—without a bribe.
 You *did great* things ; but, not being *great* in mind,
 Have left *undone* the *greatest*—and mankind.

XI.

Death laughs—Go ponder o'er the skeleton
 With which men image out the unknown thing
 That hides the past world, like to a set sun
 Which still elsewhere may rouse a brighter spring :
 Death laughs at all you weep for ;—look upon
 This hourly dread of all whose *threaten'd* sting
 Turns life to terror, even though in its sheath !
 Mark ! how its lipless mouth grins without breath !

XII.

Mark ! how it laughs and scorns at all you are !
 And yet *was* what you are : from *ear* to *ear*
 It *laughs* not—there is now no fleshy bar
 So call'd ; the antic long hath ceased to *hear*,
 But still he *smiles*, and whether near or far
 He strips from man that mantle—(far more dear
 Than even the tailor's)—his incarnate skin,
 White, black, or copper—the dead bones will grin.

XIII.

And thus Death laughs :—it is sad merriment,
 But still it *is* so ; and with such example
 Why should not Life be equally content,
 With his superior, in a smile to trample
 Upon the nothings which are daily spent
 Like bubbles on an ocean much less ample
 Than the eternal deluge, which devours
 Suns as rays—worlds like atoms—years like hours ?

XIV.

“ To be, or not to be ? that is the question,”
 Says Shakspeare, who just now is much in fashion.
 I am neither Alexander nor Hephæstion,
 Nor ever had for *abstract* fame much passion ;
 But would much rather have a sound digestion,
 Than Bonaparte's cancer :—could I dash on
 Through fifty victories to shame or fame,
 Without a stomach—what were a good name ?

XV.

“ Oh, dura ilia messorum ! ” — “ Oh,
 Ye rigid guts of reapers ! ” — I translate
 For the great benefit of those who know
 What indigestion is — that inward fate
 Which makes all Styx through one small liver flow.
 A peasant's sweat is worth his lord's estate :
 Let *this* one toil for bread — *that* rack for rent, —
 He who sleeps best may be the most content.

XVI.

“ To be, or not to be ? ” — Ere I decide,
 I should be glad to know that which *is being*.
 'T is true we speculate both far and wide,
 And deem, because we *see*, we are *all-seeing* :
 For my part, I 'll enlist on neither side,
 Until I see both sides for once agreeing.
 For me, I sometimes think that life is death,
 Rather than life a mere affair of breath.

XVII.

“ Que sais-je ? ” was the motto of Montaigne,
 As also of the first academicians ;
 That all is dubious which man may attain,
 Was one of their most favourite positions.
 There 's no such thing as certainty, that 's plain
 As any of mortality's conditions :
 So little do we know what we 're about in
 This world, I doubt if doubt itself be doubting.

XVIII.

It is a pleasant voyage perhaps to float,
 Like Pyrrho, on a sea of speculation ;
 But what if carrying sail capsize the boat ?
 Your wise men don't know much of navigation ;
 And swimming long in the abyss of thought
 Is apt to tire : a calm and shallow station
 Well nigh the shore, where one stoops down and gathers
 Some pretty shell, is best for moderate bathers.

XIX.

“ But heaven,” as Cassio says, “ is above all. —
 No more of this then, let us pray ! ”⁴ We have
 Souls to save, since Eve's slip and Adam's fall,
 Which tumbled all mankind into the grave,
 Besides fish, beasts, and birds. “ The sparrow's fall
 Is special providence,”⁵ though how it gave
 Offence, we know not : probably it perch'd
 Upon the tree which Eve so fondly search'd.

XX.

Oh, ye immortal gods ! what is theogony ?

Oh, thou, too, mortal man ! what is philanthropy ?

Oh, world, which was and is, what is cosmogony ?

Some people have accused me of misanthropy ;

And yet I know no more than the mahogany

That forms this desk, of what they mean :— *lycanthropy*

I comprehend ; for, without transformation,

Men become wolves on any slight occasion.

XXI.

But I, the mildest, meekest of mankind,

Like Moses, or Melancthon, who have ne'er
Done any thing exceedingly unkind,—

And (though I could not now and then forbear
Following the bent of body or of mind)

Have always had a tendency to spare,—

Why do they call me misanthrope ? Because

They hate me, not I them :—And here we 'll pause.

XXII.

'T is time we should proceed with our good poem,

For I maintain that it is really good,

Not only in the body, but the proem,

However little both are understood

Just now,—but by and by the truth will show 'em

Herself in her sublimest attitude :

And till she doth, I fain must be content

To share her beauty and her banishment.

XXIII.

Our hero (and, I trust, kind reader ! yours)—

Was left upon his way to the chief city

Of the immortal Peter's polish'd boors,

Who still have shown themselves more brave than witty ;

I know its mighty empire now allures

Much flattery—even Voltaire's, and that 's a pity.

For me, I deem an absolute autocrat

Not a barbarian, but much worse than that.

XXIV.

And I will war, at least in words (and—should

My chance so happen—deeds) with all who war

With thought ;—and of thought's foes by far most rude,

Tyrants and sycophants have been and are.

I know not who may conquer : if I could

Have such a prescience, it should be no bar

To this my plain, sworn, downright detestation

Of every despotism in every nation.

XXV.

It is not that I adulate the people :
 Without *me* there are demagogues enough,
 And infidels to pull down every steeple,
 And set up in their stead some proper stuff.
 Whether they may sow scepticism to reap hell,
 As is the christian dogma rather rough,
 I do not know ;—I wish men to be free
 As much from mobs as kings—from you as me.

XXVI.

The consequence is, being of no party,
 I shall offend all parties :—never mind !
 My words, at least, are more sincere and hearty
 Than if I sought to sail before the wind.
 He who has nought to gain can have small art : he
 Who neither wishes to be bound nor bind,
 May still expatiate freely, as will I,
 Nor give my voice to slavery's jackal cry.

XXVII.

That 's an appropriate simile, *that jackal*,—
 I 've heard them in the Ephesian ruins howl
 By night, as do that mercenary pack all,
 Power's base purveyors, who for pickings prowl,
 And scent the prey their masters would attack all.
 However, the poor jackals are less foul
 (As being the brave lions' keen providers)
 Than human insects, catering for spiders.

XXVIII.

Raise but an arm ! 't will brush their web away,
 And without *that*, their poison and their claws
 Are useless. Mind, good people ! what I say—
 (Or rather peoples)—*go on* without pause !
 The web of these tarantulas each day
 Increases, till you shall make common cause :
 None, save the Spanish fly and Attic bee,
 As yet are strongly stinging to be free.

XXIX.

Don Juan, who had shone in the late slaughter,
 Was left upon his way with the dispatch,
 Where blood was talk'd of as we would of water ;
 And carcasses that lay as thick as thatch
 O'er silenced cities, merely served to flatter
 Fair Catherine's pastime—who look'd on the match
 Between these nations as a main of cocks,
 Wherein she liked her own to stand like rocks.

XXX.

And there in a *kibitka* he roll'd on
 (A cursed sort of carriage without springs,
 Which on rough roads leaves scarcely a whole bone),
 Pondering on glory, chivalry, and kings,
 And orders, and on all that he had done—
 And wishing that post-horses had the wings
 Of Pegasus, or at the least post-chaises
 Had feathers, when a traveller on deep ways is.

XXXI.

At every jolt—and there were many—still
 He turn'd his eyes upon his little charge,
 As if he wish'd that she should fare less ill
 Than he, in these sad highways left at large
 To ruts, and flints, and lovely nature's skill,
 Who is no pavier, nor admits a barge
 On *her* canals, where God takes sea and land,
 Fishery and farm, both into his own hand.

XXXII.

At least he pays no rent, and has best right
 To be the first of what we used to call
 "Gentlemen farmers"—a race worn out quite
 Since lately there have been no rents at all,
 And "gentlemen" are in a piteous plight,
 And "farmers" can't raise Ceres from her fall :
 She fell with Bonaparte :—What strange thoughts
 Arise, when we see emperors fall with oats !

XXXIII.

But Juan turn'd his eyes on the sweet child
 Whom he had saved from slaughter—what a trophy !
 Oh ! ye who build up monuments, defiled
 With gore, like Nadir Shah, that costive Sophy,
 Who, after leaving Hindostan a wild,
 And scarce to the Mogul a cup of coffee
 To soothe his woes withal, was slain, the sinner !
 Because he could no more digest his dinner :—⁶

XXXIV.

Oh ye ! or we ! or she ! or he ! reflect,
 That *one* life saved, especially if young
 Or pretty, is a thing to recollect
 Far sweeter than the greenest laurels sprung
 From the manure of human clay, though deck'd
 With all the praises ever said or sung :
 Though hymn'd by every harp, unless within
 Your heart joins chorus, fame is but a din.

XXXV.

Oh, ye great authors luminous, voluminous !
 Ye twice ten hundred thousand daily scribes !
 Whose pamphlets, volumes, newspapers illumine us !
 Whether you 're paid by government in bribes,
 To prove the public debt is not consuming us—
 Or, roughly treading on the "courtier's kibes"
 With clownish heel, your popular circulation
 Feeds you by printing half the realm's starvation—

XXXVI.

Oh, ye great authors !—"A propos de bottes"—
 I have forgotten what I meant to say,
 As sometimes have been greater sages' lots :
 'T was something calculated to allay
 All wrath in barracks, palaces, or cots :
 Certes it would have been but thrown away,
 And that 's one comfort for my lost advice,
 Although no doubt it was beyond all price.

XXXVII.

But let it go :—it will one day be found
 With other relics of "a former world,"
 When this world shall be *former*, underground,
 Thrown topsy-turvy, twisted, crisp'd, and curl'd,
 Baked, fried, or burnt, turn'd inside-out, or drown'd,
 Like all the worlds before, which have been hurl'd
 First out of and then back again to chaos,
 The superstratum which will overlay us.

XXXVIII.

So Cuvier says ;—and then shall come again
 Unto the new creation, rising out
 From our old crash, some mystic, ancient strain
 Of things destroy'd and left in airy doubt :
 Like to the notions we now entertain
 Of Titans, giants, fellows of about
 Some hundred feet in height, *not* to say miles,
 And mammoths, and your winged crocodiles.

XXXIX.

Think, if then George the Fourth should be dug up !
 How the new worldlings of the then new east
 Will wonder where such animals could sup !
 (For they themselves will be but of the least :
 Even worlds miscarry, when too oft they pup,
 And every new creation hath decreased
 In size, from overworking the material—
 Men are but maggots of some huge earth's burial.)—

XL.

How will—to these young people, just thrust out
 From some fresh paradise, and set to plough,
 And dig, and sweat, and turn themselves about,
 And plant, and reap, and spin, and grind, and sow,
 Till all the arts at length are brought about,
 Especially of war and taxing,—how,
 I say, will these great relics, when they see 'em,
 Look like the monsters of a new museum!

XLI.

But I am apt to grow too metaphysical:
 “The time is out of joint,”⁷—and so am I;
 I quite forget this poem's merely quizzical,
 And deviate into matters rather dry.
 I ne'er decide what I shall say, and this I call
 Much too poetical: men should know why
 They write, and for what end; but, note or text,
 I never know the word which will come next.

XLII.

So on I ramble, now and then narrating,
 Now pondering. It is time we should narrate:
 I left Don Juan with his horses baiting—
 Now we'll get o'er the ground at a great rate.
 I shall not be particular in stating
 His journey—we've so many tours of late:
 Suppose him then at Petersburg; suppose
 That pleasant capital of painted snows;

XLIII.

Suppose him in a handsome uniform;
 A scarlet coat, black facings, a long plume,
 Waving, like sails new shiver'd in a storm,
 Over a cock'd hat, in a crowded room,
 And brilliant breeches, bright as a Cairn Gorme,⁸
 Of yellow kerseymere we may presume,
 White stockings drawn uncurdled as new milk
 O'er limbs whose symmetry set off the silk;

XLIV.

Suppose him, sword by side, and hat in hand,
 Made up by youth, fame, and an army tailor—
 That great enchanter, at whose rod's command
 Beauty springs forth, and nature's self turns paler,
 Seeing how art can make her work more grand
 (When she don't pin men's limbs in like a jailor),—
 Behold him placed as if upon a pillar! He
 Seems Love turn'd a lieutenant of artillery!

XLV.

His bandage slipp'd down into a cravat ;
 His wings subdued to epaulets ; his quiver
 Shrunk to a scabbard, with his arrows at
 His side as a small sword, but sharp as ever ;
 His bow converted into a cock'd hat ;
 But still so like, that Psyche were more clever
 Than some wives (who make blunders no less stupid)
 If she had not mistaken him for Cupid.

XLVI.

The courtiers stared, the ladies whisper'd, and
 The empress smiled ; the reigning favourite frown'd—
 I quite forget which of them was in hand
 Just then, as they are rather numerous found,
 Who took by turns that difficult command,
 Since first her majesty was singly crown'd :
 But they were mostly nervous six-foot fellows,
 All fit to make a Patagonian jealous.

XLVII.

Juan was none of these, but slight and slim,
 Blushing and beardless ; and yet ne'ertheless
 There was a something in his turn of limb,
 And still more in his eye, which seem'd to express,
 That though he look'd one of the seraphim,
 There lurk'd a man beneath the spirit's dress.
 Besides, the empress sometimes liked a boy,
 And had just buried the fair-faced Lanskoï :

XLVIII.

No wonder then that Yermoloff, or Momonoff,
 Or Scherbatoff, or any other off,
 Or on, might dread her majesty had not room enough
 Within her bosom (which was not too tough)
 For a new flame ; a thought to cast of gloom enough
 Along the aspect, whether smooth or rough,
 Of him who, in the language of his station,
 Then held that “ high official situation.”

XLIX.

Oh gentle ladies ! should you seek to know
 The import of this diplomatic phrase,
 Bid Ireland's Londonderry's Marquess¹⁰ show
 His parts of speech ; and in the strange displays
 Of that odd string of words all in a row,
 Which none divine, and every one obeys,
 Perhaps you may pick out some queer no-meaning,
 Of that weak wordy harvest the sole gleanings.

I.

I think I can explain myself without
 That sad inexplicable beast of prey—
 That sphinx, whose words would ever be a doubt,
 Did not his deeds unriddle them each day—
 That monstrous hieroglyphic—that long spout
 Of blood and water, leaden Castlereagh!
 And here I must an anecdote relate,
 But luckily of no great length or weight.

LI.

An English lady ask'd of an Italian,
 What were the actual and official duties
 Of the strange thing some women set a value on,
 Which hovers oft about some married beauties,
 Call'd "Cavalier Servente?"—a Pygmalion,
 Whose statues warm (I fear, alas! too true 't is)
 Beneath his art. The dame, press'd to disclose them,
 Said—"Lady, I beseech you to *suppose them.*"

LII.

And thus I supplicate your supposition,
 And mildest, matron-like interpretation
 Of the imperial favourite's condition.
 'T was a high place, the highest in the nation,
 In fact, if not in rank; and the suspicion
 Of any one's attaining to his station,
 No doubt gave pain, where each new pair of shoulders,
 If rather broad, made stocks rise and their holders.

LIII.

Juan, I said, was a most beauteous boy,
 And had retain'd his boyish look beyond
 The usual hirsute seasons which destroy,
 With beards and whiskers and the like, the fond
Parisian aspect which upset old Troy
 And founded Doctors' Commons:—I have conn'd
 The history of divorces, which, though chequer'd,
 Calls Ilion's the first damages on record.

LIV.

And Catherine, who loved all things (save her lord,
 Who was gone to his place), and pass'd for much,
 Admiring those (by dainty dames abhorr'd)
 Gigantic gentlemen, yet had a touch
 Of sentiment; and he she most adored
 Was the lamented Lanskoi, who was such
 A lover as had cost her many a tear,
 And yet but made a middling grenadier.

LV.

Oh thou "tetrissima causa" of all "belli!"—

Thou gate of life and death!—thou nondescript!

Whence is our exit and our entrance,—well I

May pause in pondering how all souls are dipp'd

In thy perennial fountain:—how man *fell*, I

Know not, since knowledge saw her branches stripp'd

Of her first fruit; but how he falls and rises

Since, *thou* hast settled beyond all surmises.

LVI.

Some call thee "the worst cause of war," but I

Maintain thou art the *best*: for, after all,

From thee we come, to thee we go; and why,

To get at thee, not batter down a wall,

Or waste a world? Since no one can deny

Thou dost replenish worlds both great and small:

With, or without thee, all things at a stand

Are, or would be, thou sea of life's dry land!

LVII.

Catherine, who was the grand epitome

Of that great cause of war, or peace, or what

You please (it causes all the things which be,

So you may take your choice of this or that)—

Catherine, I say, was very glad to see

The handsome herald, on whose plumage sat

Victory; and, pausing as she saw him kneel

With his dispatch, forgot to break the seal.

LVIII.

Then recollecting the whole empress, nor

Forgetting quite the woman (which composed

At least three parts of this great whole), she tore

The letter open with an air which posed

The court, that watch'd each look her visage wore

Until a royal smile at length disclosed

Fair weather for the day. Though rather spacious,

Her face was noble, her eyes fine, mouth gracious.

LIX.

Great joy was hers, or rather joys; the first

Was a ta'en city, thirty thousand slain:

Glory and triumph o'er her aspect burst,

As an East-Indian sunrise on the main.

These quench'd a moment her ambition's thirst—

So Arab deserts drink in summer's rain:

In vain!—As fall the dews on quenchless sands,

Blood only serves to wash ambition's hands!

LX.

Her next amusement was more fanciful;
 She smiled at mad Suwarrow's rhymes, who threw
 Into a Russian couplet rather dull,
 The whole gazette of thousands whom he slew.
 Her third was feminine enough to annul
 The shudder which runs naturally through
 Our veins, when things called sovereigns think it best
 To kill, and generals turn it into jest.

LXI.

The two first feelings ran their course complete,
 And lighted first her eye and then her mouth:
 The whole court look'd immediately most sweet,
 Like flowers well water'd after a long drowth:—
 But when on the lieutenant, at her feet,
 Her majesty—who liked to gaze on youth
 Almost as much as on a new dispatch—
 Glanced mildly, all the world was on the watch.

LXII.

Though somewhat large, exuberant, and truculent,
 When *wroth*; while *pleased*, she was as fine a figure
 As those who like things rosy, ripe, and succulent,
 Would wish to look on, while they are in vigour.
 She could repay each amatory look you lent
 With interest, and in turn was wont with rigour
 To exact of Cupid's bills the full amount
 At sight, nor would permit you to discount.

LXIII.

With her the latter, though at times convenient,
 Was not so necessary; for they tell
 That she was handsome, and, though fierce, *look'd* lenient,
 And always used her favourites too well.
 If once beyond her boudoir's precincts in ye went,
 Your "fortune" was in a fair way "to swell
 A man," as Giles says; "for, though she would widow all
 Nations, she liked man as an individual.

LXIV.

What a strange thing is man! and what a stranger
 Is woman! What a whirlwind is her head,
 And what a whirlpool full of depth and danger
 Is all the rest about her! whether wed,
 Or widow, maid, or mother, she can change her
 Mind like the wind; whatever she has said
 Or done, is light to what she'll say or do;—
 The oldest thing on record, and yet new!

LXV.

Oh Catherine! (for of all interjections
 To thee both *oh!* and *ah!* belong of right,
 In love and war) how odd are the connexions
 Of human thoughts, which jostle in their flight!
 Just now *yours* were cut out in different sections:
First, Ismail's capture caught your fancy quite;
Next, of new knights the fresh and glorious batch;
 And *thirdly*, he who brought you the dispatch!

LXVI.

Shakspeare talks of "the herald Mercury
 New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;"
 And some such visions cross'd her majesty,
 While her young herald knelt before her still.
 'T is very true the hill seem'd rather high
 For a lieutenant to climb up; but skill
 Smooth'd even the Simplon's steep, and, by God's blessing,
 With youth and health all kisses are "heaven-kissing."

LXVII.

Her majesty look'd down, the youth look'd up—
 And so they fell in love;—she with his face,
 His grace, his God-knows-what: for Cupid's cup
 With the first draught intoxicates apace,
 A quintessential laudanum or "black drop"
 Which makes one drunk at once, without the base
 Expedient of full bumpers; for the eye
 In love drinks all life's fountains (save tears) dry.

LXVIII.

He, on the other hand, if not in love,
 Fell into that no less imperious passion,
 Self-love—which, when some sort of thing above
 Ourselves, a singer, dancer, much in fashion,
 Or duchess, princess, empress, "deigns to prove"
 ('T is Pope's phrase) a great longing, though a rash one,
 For one especial person out of many,
 Makes us believe ourselves as good as any.

LXIX.

Besides, he was of that delighted age
 Which makes all females' ages equal—when
 We don't much care with whom we may engage,
 As bold as Daniel in the lions' den,
 So that we can our native sun assuage
 In the next ocean, which may flow just then,
 To make a twilight in—just as Sol's heat is
 Quench'd in the lap of the salt sea, or Thetis.

LXX.

And Catherine (we must say thus much for Catherine),
 Though bold and bloody, was the kind of thing
 Whose temporary passion was quite flattering,
 Because each lover look'd a sort of king,
 Made up upon an amatory pattern—
 A royal husband in all save the *ring*—
 Which, being the damn'dest part of matrimony,
 Seem'd taking out the sting to leave the honey.

LXXI.

And when you add to this, her womanhood
 In its meridian, her blue eyes, or gray—
 (The last, if they have soul, are quite as good,
 Or better, as the best examples say :
 Napoleon's, Mary's (Queen of Scotland) should
 Lend to that colour a transcendent ray ;
 And Pallas also sanctions the same hue—
 Too wise to look through optics black or blue)—

LXXII.

Her sweet smile, and her then majestic figure,
 Her plumpness, her imperial condescension,
 Her preference of a boy to men much bigger
 (Fellows whom Messalina's self would pension),
 Her prime of life, just now in juicy vigour,
 With other *extras* which we need not mention,—
 All these, or any one of these, explain
 Enough to make a stripling very vain.

LXXIII.

And that 's enough, for love is vanity,
 Selfish in its beginning as its end,
 Except where 't is a mere insanity,
 A maddening spirit which would strive to blend
 Itself with beauty's frail inanity,
 On which the passion's self seems to depend :
 And hence some heathenish philosophers
 Make love the main-spring of the universe.

LXXIV.

Besides Platonic love, besides the love
 Of God, the love of sentiment, the loving
 Of faithful pairs—(I needs must rhyme with dove,
 That good old steam-boat which keeps verses moving
 'Gainst reason—reason ne'er was hand-and-glove
 With rhyme, but always lean'd less to improving
 The sound than sense)—besides all these pretences
 To love, there are those things which words name senses ;

LXXV.

Those movements, those improvements in our bodies,
 Which make all bodies anxious to get out
 Of their own sand-pits to mix with a goddess—
 For such all women are at first, no doubt.
 How beautiful that moment! and how odd is
 That fever which precedes the languid rout
 Of our sensations! What a curious way
 The whole thing is of clothing souls in clay!

LXXVI.

The noblest kind of love is love platonical,
 To end or to begin with; the next grand
 Is that which may be christen'd love canonical,
 Because the clergy take the thing in hand;
 The third sort to be noted in our chronicle,
 As flourishing in every christian land,
 Is, when chaste matrons to their other ties
 Add what may be call'd *marriage in disguise*.

LXXVII.

Well, we won't analyse—our story must
 Tell for itself: the sovereign was smitten,
 Juan much flatter'd by her love, or lust;—
 I cannot stop to alter words once written,
 And the two are so mix'd with human dust,
 That he who *names one*, both perchance may hit on;
 But in such matters Russia's mighty empress
 Behaved no better than a common sempstress.

LXXVIII.

The whole court melted into one wide whisper,
 And all lips were applied unto all ears!
 The elder ladies' wrinkles curl'd much crisper
 As they beheld; the younger cast some leers
 On one another, and each lovely lisper
 Smiled as she talk'd the matter o'er; but tears
 Of rivalry rose in each clouded eye
 Of all the standing army who stood by.

LXXIX.

All the ambassadors of all the powers
 Inquired, who was this very new young man,
 Who promised to be great in some few hours?
 Which is full soon (though life is but a span):
 Already they beheld the silver showers
 Of roubles rain, as fast as specie can,
 Upon his cabinet, besides the presents
 Of several ribbons and some thousand peasants.

LXXX.

Catherine was generous ;—all such ladies are :
 Love, that great opener of the heart and all
 The ways that lead there, be they near or far,
 Above, below, by turnpikes great or small,—
 Love—(though she had a cursed taste for war,
 And was not the best wife, unless we call
 Such Clytemnestra ; though perhaps 't is better
 That one should die, than two drag on the fetter)—

LXXXI.

Love had made Catherine make each lover's fortune,
 Unlike our own half-chaste Elizabeth,
 Whose avarice all disbursements did importune,
 If history, the grand liar, ever saith
 The truth ; and though grief her old age might shorten,
 Because she put a favourite to death,
 Her vile ambiguous method of flirtation,
 And stinginess, disgrace her sex and station.

LXXXII.

But when the levee rose, and all was bustle
 In the dissolving circle, all the nations'
 Ambassadors began as 't were to bustle
 Round the young man with their congratulations ;
 Also the softer silks were heard to rustle
 Of gentle dames, among whose recreations
 It is to speculate on handsome faces,
 Especially when such lead to high places.

LXXXIII.

Juan, who found himself, he knew not how,
 A general object of attention, made
 His answers with a very graceful bow,
 As if born for the ministerial trade.
 Though modest, on his unembarrass'd brow
 Nature had written "gentleman." He said
 Little, but to the purpose ; and his manner
 Flung hovering graces o'er him like a banner.

LXXXIV.

An order from her majesty consign'd
 Our young lieutenant to the genial care
 Of those in office : all the world look'd kind
 (As it will look sometimes with the first stare,
 Which youth would not act ill to keep in mind) ;
 As also did Miss Protosoff then there,
 Named, from her mystic office, "l'Epreuveuse,"
 A term inexplicable to the Muse.

LXXXV.

With *her* then, as in humble duty bound,
 Juan retired,—and so will I, until
 My Pegasus shall tire of touching ground.
 We have just lit on a “heaven-kissing hill,”
 So lofty that I feel my brain turn round,
 And all my fancies whirling like a mill;
 Which is a signal to my nerves and brain
 To take a quiet ride in some green lane.

NOTES TO CANTO IX.

Note 1. Stanza i.

Query, *Ney*?—PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Note 2. Stanza ii.

The late Lord Kinnaird was received in Paris, in 1814, with great civility by the Duke of Wellington and the royal family of France; but he had himself presented to Buonaparte during the Hundred Days, and intrigued on with those of that faction, in spite of the Duke's remonstrances, until the re-restored government ordered him out of the French territory in 1816. In 1817, he became acquainted at Brussels with one *Marinet*, an adventurer mixed up in a conspiracy to assassinate the Duke in the streets of Paris. This fellow at first promised to discover the man who actually shot at his Grace, but, on reaching Paris, shuffled and would say nothing; and Lord Kinnaird's *avowed* cause of complaint against the Duke was, that he did not *protect* this creature from the French police, who, not doubting that he had been one of the conspirators against his Grace's life, arrested him accordingly. He was tried along with the actual assassin, and both were acquitted by the Parisian jury.—E.

Note 3. Stanza vi.

"I at this time got a post, being for fatigue, with four others.—We were sent to break biscuit, and make a mess for Lord Wellington's hounds. I was very hungry, and thought it a good job at the time, as we got our own fill while we broke the biscuit,—a thing I had not got for some days. When thus engaged, the Prodigal Son was never once out of my mind; and I sighed, as I fed the dogs, over my humble situation and my ruined hopes."—*Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regiment during the war in Spain.*

Note 4. Stanza xix.

See *Othello*.

Note 5. Stanza xix.

—"We defy augury: there is a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow."—*Hamlet*.

Note 6. Stanza xxxiii.

He was killed in a conspiracy, after his temper had been exasperated, by his extreme costivity, to a degree of insanity.

Note 7. Stanza xxxv.

"The age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe."—*Hamlet*.

Note 8. Stanza xli.

"The time is out of joint:—O cursed spite!
That ever I was born to set it right!"—*Hamlet*.

Note 9. Stanza xliii.

A yellow-coloured crystal, denominated from a hill in Inverness-shire, where it is found. This has been generally called the Scottish topaz.—JAMIESON.

Note 10. Stanza xlvii.

He was the "grande passion" of the *grande* Catherine.—See her Lives, under the head of "Lanskoi."

Note 11. Stanza xlix.

This was written long before the suicide of that person.

Note 12. Stanza lxiii.

"His fortune swells him, it is rank, he's married."—Sir Giles Overreach; MAS-SINGER.—See *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*.

Note 13. Stanza lxvi.

See *Hamlet*, act iii, sc. iv.

CANTO X.

I.

WHEN Newton saw an apple fall, he found
 In that slight startle from his contemplation—
 'T is said (for I 'll not answer above ground
 For any sage's creed or calculation)—
 A mode of proving that the earth turn'd round
 In a most natural whirl, call'd "gravitation;"
 And thus is the sole mortal who could grapple,
 Since Adam, with a fall, or with an apple.

II.

Man fell with apples, and with apples rose,
 If this be true; for we must deem the mode
 In which Sir Isaac Newton could disclose,
 Through the then unpaved stars, the turnpike road,
 A thing to counterbalance human woes;
 For, ever since, immortal man hath glow'd
 With all kinds of mechanics, and full soon
 Steam-engines will conduct him to the moon.

III.

And wherefore this exordium?—Why, just now,
 In taking up this paltry sheet of paper,
 My bosom underwent a glorious glow,
 And my internal spirit cut a caper:
 And though so much inferior, as I know,
 To those who, by the dint of glass and vapour,
 Discover stars, and sail in the wind's eye,
 I wish to do as much by poesy.

IV.

In the wind's eye I have sail'd, and sail; but for
 The stars, I own my telescope is dim;
 But at the least I've shunn'd the common shore,
 And, leaving land far out of sight, would skim
 The ocean of eternity: the roar
 Of breakers has not daunted my slight, trim,
 But still sea-worthy skiff; and she may float
 Where ships have foundered, as doth many a boat.

V.

We left our hero Juan in the *bloom*
 Of favouritism, but not yet in the *blush* ;
 And far be it from my *Muses* to presume
 (For I have more than one Muse at a push)
 To follow him beyond the drawing-room :
 It is enough that fortune found him flush
 Of youth and vigour, beauty, and those things,
 Which for an instant clip enjoyment's wings.

VI.

But soon they grow again, and leave their nest.
 " Oh ! " saith the Psalmist, " that I had a dove's
 Pinions to flee away and be at rest ! "
 And who that recollects young years and loves,—
 Though hoary now, and with a withering breast,
 And palsied fancy, which no longer roves
 Beyond its dimm'd eye's sphere,—but would much rather
 Sigh like his son, than cough like his grandfather?

VII.

But sighs subside, and tears (even widows') shrink,
 Like Arno, in the summer, to a shallow,
 So narrow as to shame their wintry brink,
 Which threatens inundations deep and yellow !
 Such difference doth a few months make. You 'd think
 Grief a rich field which never would lie fallow ;
 No more it doth, its ploughs but change their boys
 Who furrow some new soil to sow for joys.

VIII.

But coughs will come when sighs depart—and now
 And then before sighs cease ; for oft the one
 Will bring the other, ere the lake-like brow
 Is ruffled by a wrinkle, or the sun
 Of life reach ten o'clock : and, while a glow,
 Hectic and brief as summer's day nigh done,
 O'erspreads the cheek which seems too pure for clay,
 Thousands blaze, love, hope, die—how happy they !

IX.

But Juan was not meant to die so soon.
 We left him in the focus of such glory
 As may be won by favour of the moon,
 Or ladies' fancies—rather transitory
 Perhaps : but who would scorn the month of June,
 Because December, with his breath so hoary,
 Must come ? Much rather should he court the ray,
 To hoard up warmth against a wintry day.

X.

Besides, he had some qualities which fix
 Middle-aged ladies even more than young :
 The former know what 's what ; while new-fledged chicks
 Know little more of love than what is sung
 In rhymes, or dream'd (for fancy will play tricks)
 In visions of those skies from whence love sprung.
 Some reckon women by their suns or years—
 I rather think the moon should date the years.

XI.

And why? because she 's changeable and chaste.
 I know no other reason, whatsoe'er
 Suspicious people, who find fault in haste,
 May chuse to tax me with ; which is not fair,
 Nor flattering to " their temper or their taste,"
 As my friend Jeffrey writes with such an air :
 However, I forgive him, and I trust
 He will forgive himself ;—if not, I must.

XII.

Old enemies who have become new friends
 Should so continue—'t is a point of honour ;
 And I know nothing which could make amends
 For a return to hatred : I would shun her
 Like garlick, howsoever she extends
 Her hundred arms and legs, and fain outrun her.
 Old flames, new wives, become our bitterest foes—
 Converted foes should scorn to join with those.

XIII.

This were the worst desertion : renegadoes,
 Even shuffling Southey—that incarnate lie—
 Would scarcely join again the " reformadoes,"
 Whom he forsook to fill the laureate's sty :
 And honest men, from Iceland to Barbadoes,
 Whether in Caledon or Italy,
 Should not veer round with every breath, nor seize,
 To pain, the moment when you cease to please.

XIV.

The lawyer and the critic but behold
 The baser sides of literature and life,
 And nought remains unseen, but much untold.
 By those who scour those double vales of strife.
 While common men grow ignorantly old,
 The lawyer's brief is like the surgeon's knife,
 Dissecting the whole inside of a question,
 And with it all the process of digestion.

XV.

A legal broom 's a moral chimney-sweeper,
 And that 's the reason he himself 's so dirty;
 The endless soot⁵ bestows a tint far deeper
 Than can be hid by altering his shirt; he
 Retains the sable stains of the dark creeper—
 At least some twenty-nine do out of thirty,
 In all their habits: not so *you*, I own;
 As Cæsar wore his robe, you wear your gown.

XVI.

And all our little feuds, at least all *mine*,
 Dear Jeffrey, once my most redoubted foe
 (As far as rhyme and criticism combine
 To make such puppets of us things below),
 Are over: Here 's a health to "Auld Lang Syne!"
 I do not know you, and may never know
 Your face,—but you have acted on the whole
 Most nobly, and I own it from my soul.

XVII.

And when I use the phrase of "Auld Lang Syne!"
 'T is not address'd to you—the more 's the pity
 For me, for I would rather take my wine
 With you, than aught (save Scott) in your proud city.
 But somehow,—it may seem a schoolboy's whine,
 And yet I seek not to be grand nor witty,
 But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred
 A whole one, and my heart flies to my head:—

XVIII.

As "Auld Lang Syne" brings Scotland, one and all
 Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue hills, and clear streams
 The Dee, the Don, Balgounie's Brig's *black wall*,⁴
 All my boy feelings, all my gentler dreams
 Of what I *then dreamt*, clothed in their own pall,
 Like Banquo's offspring—floating past me seems
 My childhood in this childishness of mine;
 I care not—'t is a glimpse of "Auld Lang Syne."

XIX.

And though, as you remember, in a fit
 Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly,
 I rail'd at Scots to show my wrath and wit,
 Which must be own'd was sensitive and surly,
 Yet 't is in vain such sallies to permit—
 They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early:
 I "*scotch'd*, not *kill'd*," the Scotchman in my blood,
 And love the land of "mountain and of flood."⁵

XX.

Don Juan, who was real, or ideal,—
 For both are much the same, since what men think
 Exists when the once thinkers are less real
 Than what they thought, for mind can never sink,
 And 'gainst the body makes a strong appeal;
 And yet 't is very puzzling on the brink
 Of what is call'd eternity, to stare,
 And know no more of what is here than there:—

XXI.

Don Juan grew a very polish'd Russian—
How we won't mention, *why* we need not say:
 Few youthful minds can stand the strong concussion
 Of any slight temptation in their way;
 But *his* just now were spread as is a cushion
 Smooth'd for a monarch's seat of honour: gay
 Damsels, and dances, revels, ready money,
 Made ice seem paradise, and winter sunny.

XXII.

The favour of the empress was agreeable;
 And though the duty wax'd a little hard,
 Young people at his time of life should be able
 To come off handsomely in that regard.
 He now was growing up like a green tree, able
 For love, war, or ambition, which reward
 Their luckier votaries, till old age's tedium
 Make some prefer the circulating medium.

XXIII.

About this time, as might have been anticipated,
 Seduced by youth and dangerous examples,
 Don Juan grew, I fear, a little dissipated;
 Which is a sad thing, and not only tramples
 On our fresh feelings, but—as being participated
 With all kinds of incorrigible samples
 Of frail humanity—must make us selfish,
 And shut our souls up in us like a shell-fish.

XXIV.

This we pass over. We will also pass
 The usual progress of intrigues between
 Unequal matches, such as are, alas!
 A young lieutenant's with a *not old* queen,
 But one who is not so youthful as she was
 In all the royalty of sweet seventeen.
 Sovereigns may sway materials, but not matter,
 And wrinkles, the d—d democrats, won't flatter:

XXV.

And Death, the sovereign's sovereign, though the great
 Gracchus of all mortality, who levels,
 With his *Agrarian* laws, the high estate
 Of him who feasts, and fights, and roars, and revels,
 To one small grass-grown patch (which must await
 Corruption for its crop) with the poor devils
 Who never had a foot of land till now,—
 Death 's a reformer, all men must allow.

XXVI.

He lived (not Death, but Juan) in a hurry
 Of waste, and haste, and glare, and gloss, and glitter,
 In this gay clime of bear-skins black and furry—
 Which (though I hate to say a thing that 's bitter)
 Peep out sometimes, when things are in a flurry,
 Through all the "purple and fine linen," fitter
 For Babylon's than Russia's royal harlot—
 And neutralize her outward show of scarlet.

XXVII.

And this same state we won't describe: we would
 Perhaps from hearsay, or from recollection;
 But getting nigh grim Dante's "obscure wood,"
 That horrid equinox, that hateful section
 Of human years, that half-way house, that rude
 Hut, whence wise travellers drive with circumspection
 Life's sad post-horses o'er the dreary frontier
 Of age, and, looking back to youth, give *one* tear;—

XXVIII.

I won't describe—that is, if I can help
 Description: and I won't reflect—that is,
 If I can stave off thought, which—as a whelp
 Clings to its teat—sticks to me through the abyss
 Of this odd labyrinth; or as the kelp
 Holds by the rock; or as a lover's kiss
 Drains its first draught of lips: but, as I said,
 I *won't* philosophize, and *will* be read.

XXIX.

Juan, instead of courting courts, was courted,
 A thing which happens rarely; this he owed
 Much to his youth, and much to his reported
 Valour; much also to the blood he show'd,
 Like a race-horse; much to each dress he sported,
 Which set the beauty off in which he glow'd,
 As purple clouds befringe the sun; but most
 He owed to an old woman and his post.

XXX.

He wrote to Spain :—and all his near relations,
 Perceiving he was in a handsome way
 Of getting on himself, and finding stations
 For cousins also, answer'd the same day.
 Several prepared themselves for emigrations;
 And, eating ices, were o'erheard to say,
 That with the addition of a slight pelisse,
 Madrid's and Moscow's climes were of a piece.

XXXI.

His mother, Donna Inez, finding too
 That in the lieu of drawing on his banker,
 Where his assets were waxing rather few,
 He had brought his spending to a handsome anchor,—
 Replied, “that she was glad to see him through
 Those pleasures after which wild youth will hanker;
 As the sole sign of man's being in his senses
 Is, learning to reduce his past expenses.

XXXII.

“She also recommended him to God,
 And no less to God's Son, as well as Mother,
 Warn'd him against Greek-worship, which looks odd
 In catholic eyes: but told him too to smother
Outward dislike, which don't look well abroad;
 Inform'd him that he had a little brother
 Born in a second wedlock; and above
 All, praised the empress's *maternal* love.

XXXIII.

“She could not too much give her approbation
 Unto an empress, who preferr'd young men
 Whose age, and, what was better still, whose nation
 And climate, stopp'd all scandal (now and then):—
 At home it might have given her some vexation;
 But where thermometers sunk down to ten,
 Or five, or one, or zero, she could never
 Believe that virtue thaw'd before the river.”

XXXIV.

Oh for a *forty-parson power*⁶ to chaunt
 Thy praise, hypocrisy! Oh for a hymn
 Loud as the virtues thou dost loudly vaunt,
 Not practise! Oh for trumps of cherubim!
 Or the ear-trumpet of my good old aunt,
 Who, though her spectacles at last grew dim,
 Drew quiet consolation through its hint,
 When she no more could read the pious print.

XXXV.

She was no hypocrite, at least, poor soul !

But went to heaven in as sincere a way
As any body on the elected roll,

Which portions out upon the judgment day
Heaven's freeholds, in a sort of doomsday scroll,

Such as the conqueror William did repay
His knights with, lotting others' properties
Into some sixty thousand new knights' fees.

XXXVI.

I can't complain, whose ancestors are there,

Erneis, Radulphus—eight-and-forty manors
(If that my memory doth not greatly err)

Were their reward for following Billy's banners ;
And, though I can't help thinking 't was scarce fair

To strip the Saxons of their *hydes*,⁷ like tanners,
Yet as they founded churches with the produce,
You 'll deem, no doubt, they put it to a good use.

XXXVII.

The gentle Juan flourish'd, though at times

He felt like other plants call'd sensitive,
Which shrink from touch, as monarchs do from rhymes,

Save such as Southey can afford to give.
Perhaps he long'd, in bitter frosts, for climes

In which the Neva's ice would cease to live
Before May-day : perhaps, despite his duty,
In royalty's vast arms he sigh'd for beauty :

XXXVIII.

Perhaps,—but, *sans* perhaps, we need not seek

For causes young or old : the canker-worm
Will feed upon the fairest, freshest cheek,

As well as further drain the wither'd form :
Care, like a housekeeper, brings every week

His bills in, and, however we may storm,
They must be paid ; though six days smoothly run,
The seventh will bring blue devils or a dun.

XXXIX.

I don't know how it was, but he grew sick :

The empress was alarm'd, and her physician
(The same who physick'd Peter) found the tick

Of his fierce pulse betoken a condition
Which augur'd of the dead, however *quick*

Itself, and show'd a feverish disposition ;
At which the whole court was extremely troubled,
The sovereign shock'd, and all his medicines doubled.

XL.

Low were the whispers, manifold the rumours :
 Some said he had been poison'd by Potemkin ;
 Others talk'd learnedly of certain tumours,
 Exhaustion, or disorders of the same kin ;
 Some said 't was a concoction of the humours,
 Which with the blood too readily will claim kin ;
 Others again were ready to maintain,
 " 'T was only the fatigue of last campaign."

XLI.

But here is one prescription out of many :
 " Sodæ sulphat. ʒvj. ʒfs. Mannæ optim.
 Aq. fervent. f. ʒifs. ʒij. tinct. Sennæ
 Haustus" (and here the surgeon came and cupp'd him).
 " R. Pulv. Com. gr. iij. Ipecacuanhæ"
 (With more beside, if Juan had not stopp'd 'em),
 " Bolus potassæ sulfuret. sumendus,
 Et haustus ter in die capiendus."

XLII.

This is the way physicians mend or end us,
 " Secundum artem : " but although we sneer
 In health—when ill, we call them to attend us,
 Without the least propensity to jeer :
 While that " hiatus maxime deflendus,"
 To be fill'd up by spade or mattock, 's near,
 Instead of gliding graciously down Lethe,
 We tease mild Baillie, or soft Abernethy.^a

XLIII.

Juan demurr'd at this first notice to
 Quit ; and, though death had threaten'd an ejection,
 His youth and constitution bore him through,
 And sent the doctors in a new direction.
 But still his state was delicate : the hue
 Of health but flicker'd with a faint reflection
 Along his wasted cheek, and seem'd to gravel
 The faculty—who said that he must travel.

XLIV.

The climate was too cold, they said, for him,
 Meridian-born, to bloom in. This opinion
 Made the chaste Catherine look a little grim,
 Who did not like at first to lose her minion :
 But when she saw his dazzling eye wax dim,
 And drooping like an eagle's with clipp'd pinion,
 She then resolved to send him on a mission,
 But in a style becoming his condition.

XLV.

There was just then a kind of a discussion,
 A sort of treaty or negotiation,
 Between the British cabinet and Russian,
 Maintain'd with all the due prevarication
 With which great states such things are apt to push on ;
 Something about the Baltic's navigation,
 Hides, train-oil, tallow, and the rights of Thetis,
 Which Britons deem their "uti possidetis."

XLVI.

So Catherine, who had a handsome way
 Of fitting out her favourites, conferr'd
 This secret charge on Juan, to display
 At once her royal splendour, and reward
 His services. He kiss'd hands the next day,
 Received instructions how to play his card,
 Was laden with all kinds of gifts and honours,
 Which show'd what great discernment was the donor's.

XLVII.

But she was lucky, and luck 's all. Your queens
 Are generally prosperous in reigning ;
 Which puzzles us to know what fortune means.
 But to continue : though her years were waning,
 Her climacteric teased her like her teens ;
 And though her dignity brook'd no complaining,
 So much did Juan's setting off distress her,
 She could not find at first a fit successor.

XLVIII.

But time, the comforter, will come at last ;
 And four-and-twenty hours, and twice that number
 Of candidates requesting to be placed,
 Made Catherine taste next night a quiet slumber :—
 Not that she meant to fix again in haste,
 Nor did she find the quantity encumber,
 But always chusing with deliberation,
 Kept the place open for their emulation.

XLIX.

While this high post of honour 's in abeyance,
 For one or two days, reader, we request
 You 'll mount with our young hero the conveyance
 Which wafted him from Petersburg ; the best
 Barouche, which had the glory to display once
 The fair Czarina's autocratic crest,
 When, a new Iphigene, she went to Tauris,
 Was given to her favourite,⁹ and now bore his.

L.

A bull-dog, and a bull-finch, and an ermine,
 All private favourites of Don Juan ; for
 (Let deeper sages the true cause determine)
 He had a kind of inclination, or
 Weakness, for what most people deem mere vermin—
 Live animals :—an old maid of threescore
 For cats and birds more *penchant* ne'er display'd,
 Although he was not old, nor even a maid.

LI.

The animals aforesaid occupied
 Their station : there were valets, secretaries,
 In other vehicles ; but at his side
 Sat little Leila, who survived the parries
 He made 'gainst Cossack sabres, in the wide
 Slaughter of Ismail. Though my wild muse varies
 Her note, she don't forget the infant girl
 Whom he preserved, a pure and living pearl.

LII.

Poor little thing ! She was as fair as docile,
 And with that gentle, serious character,
 As rare in living beings as a fossile
 Man, 'midst thy mouldy mammoths, " grand Cuvier !"
 Ill fitted was her ignorance to jostle
 With this o'erwhelming world, where all must err :
 But she was yet but ten years old, and therefore
 Was tranquil, though she knew not why or wherefore.

LIII.

Don Juan loved her, and she loved him, as
 Nor brother, father, sister, daughter love.
 I cannot tell exactly what it was ;
 He was not yet quite old enough to prove
 Parental feelings, and the other class,
 Call'd brotherly affection, could not move
 His bosom—for he never had a sister :
 Ah ! if he had, how much he would have miss'd her !

LIV.

And still less was it sensual ; for besides
 That he was not an ancient debauchee
 (Who like sour fruit to stir their veins' salt tides,
 As acids rouse a dormant alkali),
 Although ('t will happen as our planet guides)
 His youth was not the chastest that might be,
 There was the purest platonism at bottom
 Of all his feelings—only he forgot 'em.

LV.

Just now there was no peril of temptation ;
 He loved the infant orphan he had saved,
 As patriots (now and then) may love a nation ;
 His pride too felt that she was not enslaved,
 Owing to him ;—as also her salvation,
 Through his means and the church's, might be paved.
 But one thing 's odd, which here must be inserted—
 The little Turk refused to be converted.

LVI.

'T was strange enough she should retain the impression
 Through such a scene of change, and dread, and slaughter ;
 But, though three bishops told her the transgression,
 She show'd a great dislike to holy water :
 She also had no passion for confession ;
 Perhaps she had nothing to confess :—no matter ;
 Whate'er the cause, the church made little of it—
 She still held out that Mahomet was a prophet.

LVII.

In fact, the only christian she could bear
 Was Juan, whom she seem'd to have selected
 In place of what her home and friends once *were*.
 He *naturally* loved what he protected ;
 And thus they form'd a rather curious pair :
 A guardian green in years, a ward connected
 In neither clime, time, blood, with her defender ;
 And yet this want of ties made theirs more tender.

LVIII.

They journey'd on through Poland and through Warsaw,
 Famous for mines of salt and yokes of iron :
 Through Courland also, which that famous farce saw,
 Which gave her dukes ¹⁰ the graceless name of " Biron."
 'T is the same landscape which the modern Mars saw,
 Who march'd to Moscow, led by fame, the syren !
 To lose, by one month's frost, some twenty years
 Of conquest, and his guard of grenadiers.

LIX.

Let not this seem an anti-climax :—" Oh !
 My guard ! my old guard !" ¹¹exclaim'd that god of clay—
 Think of the thunderer's falling down below
 Carotid-artery-cutting Castlereagh !—
 Alas ! that glory should be chill'd by snow !
 But, should we wish to warm us on our way
 Through Poland, there is Kosciusko's name
 Might scatter fire through ice, like Hecla's flame.

LX.

From Poland they came on through Prussia Proper,
 And Königsberg the capital, whose vaunt,
 Besides some veins of iron, lead, or copper,
 Has lately been the great Professor Kant.
 Juan, who cared not a tobacco-stopper
 About philosophy, pursued his jaunt
 To Germany, whose somewhat tardy millions
 Have princes who spur more than their postilions.

LXI.

And thence through Berlin, Dresden, and the like,
 Until he reach'd the castellated Rhine :—
 Ye glorious gothic scenes ! how much ye strike
 All phantasies, not e'en excepting mine :
 A gray wall, a green ruin, rusty pike
 Make my soul pass the equinoctial line
 Between the present and past worlds, and hover
 Upon their airy confine, half-seas-over.

LXII.

But Juan posted on through Manheim, Bonn,
 Which Drachenfels frowns over, like a spectre
 Of the good feudal times for ever gone,
 On which I have not time just now to lecture.
 From thence he was drawn onwards to Cologne,
 A city which presents to the inspector
 Eleven thousand maidenheads of bone,
 The greatest number flesh hath ever known.¹²

LXIII.

From thence to Holland's Hague and Helvoetsluys,
 That water-land of Dutchmen and of ditches,
 Where juniper expresses its best juice—
 The poor man's sparkling substitute for riches.
 Senates and sages have condemn'd its use—
 But to deny the mob a cordial which is
 Too often all the clothing, meat, or fuel,
 Good government has left them, seems but cruel.

LXIV.

Here he embark'd, and, with a flowing sail,
 Went bounding for the island of the free,
 Towards which the impatient wind blew half a gale ;
 High dash'd the spray, the bows dipp'd in the sea,
 And sea-sick passengers turn'd somewhat pale :
 But Juan, season'd, as he well might be
 By former voyages, stood to watch the skiffs
 Which pass'd, or catch the first glimpse of the cliffs.

LXV.

At length they rose, like a white wall along
 The blue sea's border ; and Don Juan felt—
 What even young strangers feel, a little strong
 At the first sight of Albion's chalky belt—
 A kind of pride that he should be among
 Those haughty shopkeepers, who sternly dealt
 Their goods and edicts out from pole to pole,
 And made the very billows pay them toll.

LXVI.

I have no great cause to love that spot of earth,
 Which holds what *might have been* the noblest nation ;
 But, though I owe it little but my birth,
 I feel a mix'd regret and veneration
 For its decaying fame and former worth.
 Seven years (the usual term of transportation)
 Of absence lay one's old resentments level,
 When a man's country 's going to the devil.

LXVII.

Alas ! could she but fully, truly, know
 How her great name is now throughout abhorr'd ;
 How eager all the earth is for the blow
 Which shall lay bare her bosom to the sword ;
 How all the nations deem her their worst foe,
 That worse than *worst of foes*,—the once adored
 False friend, who held out freedom to mankind,
 And now would chain them to the very mind ;—

LXVIII.

Would she be proud, or boast herself the free,
 Who is but first of slaves ? The nations are
 In prison ; but the jailor, what is he ?
 No less a victim to the bolt and bar.
 Is the poor privilege to turn the key
 Upon the captive, freedom ? He 's as far
 From the enjoyment of the earth and air
 Who watches o'er the chain, as they who wear.

LXIX.

Don Juan now saw Albion's earliest beauties—
 Thy cliffs, *dear* Dover ! harbour, and hotel ;
 Thy custom-house with all its delicate duties ;
 Thy waiters running mucks at every bell ;
 Thy packets, all whose passengers are booties
 To those who upon land or water dwell ;
 And last, not least, to strangers uninstructed,
 Thy long, long bills, whence nothing is deducted.

LXX.

Juan, though careless, young, and magnifique,
 And rich in roubles, diamonds, cash, and credit,
 Who did not limit much his bills per week,
 Yet stared at this a little, though he paid it—
 (His *maggior duomo*, a smart subtle Greek,
 Before him summ'd the awful scroll and read it):
 But doubtless as the air, though seldom sunny,
 Is free, the respiration 's worth the money.

LXXI.

On with the horses! Off to Canterbury!
 Tramp, tramp o'er pebble, and splash, splash through puddle,
 Hurrah! how swiftly speeds the post so merry!
 Not like slow Germany, wherein they muddle
 Along the road, as if they went to bury
 Their fare; and also pause, besides, to fuddle
 With "schnapps"—sad dogs! whom "Hundsot" or "Ferflucter"
 Affect no more than lightning a conductor.

LXXII.

Now there is nothing gives a man such spirits,
 Leavening his blood as Cayenne doth a curry,
 As going at full speed—no matter where its
 Direction be, so 't is but in a hurry,
 And merely for the sake of its own merits:
 For the less cause there is for all this flurry,
 The greater is the pleasure in arriving
 At the great *end* of travel—which is driving.

LXXIII.

They saw at Canterbury the cathedral;
 Black Edward's helm, and Becket's bloody stone,
 Were pointed out as usual by the bedral,
 In the same quaint, uninterested tone:
 There 's glory again for you, gentle reader! All
 Ends in a rusty casque and dubious bone,
 Half-solved into those sodas or magnesias,
 Which form that bitter draught, the human species.

LXXIV.

The effect on Juan was of course sublime:
 He breathed a thousand Cressys, as he saw
 That casque, which never stoop'd, except to Time.
 Even the bold churchman's tomb excited awe,
 Who died in the then great attempt to climb
 O'er kings, who *now* at least *must* talk of law,
 Before they butcher. Little Leila gazed,
 And ask'd why such a structure had been raised:

LXXV.

And being told it was "God's house," she said
 He was well lodged, but only wonder'd how
 He suffer'd infidels in his homestead,
 The cruel Nazarenes, who had laid low
 His holy temples in the lands which bred
 The true believers;—and her infant brow
 Was bent with grief that Mahomet should resign
 A mosque so noble, flung like pearls to swine.

LXXVI.

On, on! through meadows, managed like a garden,
 A paradise of hops and high production;
 For, after years of travel by a bard in
 Countries of greater heat but lesser suction,
 A green field is a sight which makes him pardon
 The absence of that more sublime construction
 Which mixes up vines, olives, precipices,
 Glaciers, volcanos, oranges, and ices.

LXXVII.

And when I think upon a pot of beer——
 But I won't weep!—and so, drive on, postilions!
 As the smart boys spurr'd fast in their career,
 Juan admired these highways of free millions;
 A country in all senses the most dear
 To foreigner or native, save some silly ones,
 Who "kick against the pricks" just at this juncture,
 And for their pains get only a fresh puncture.

LXXVIII.

What a delightful thing's a turnpike road!
 So smooth, so level, such a mode of shaving
 The earth, as scarce the eagle in the broad
 Air can accomplish, with his wide wings waving.
 Had such been cut in Phaeton's time, the god
 Had told his son to satisfy his craving
 With the York mail;—but, onward as we roll,
 "Surgit amari aliquid"—the toll!

LXXIX.

Alas! how deeply painful is all payment!
 Take lives, take wives, take aught except men's purses.
 As Machiavel shows those in purple raiment,
 Such is the shortest way to general curses.
 They hate a murderer much less than a claimant
 On that sweet ore, which every body nurses:
 Kill a man's family, and he may brook it—
 But keep your hands out of his breeches' pocket.

LXXX.

So said the Florentine : ye monarchs, hearken
 To your instructor. Juan now was borne,
 Just as the day began to wane and darken,
 O'er the high hill which looks with pride or scorn
 Toward the great city :—ye who have a spark in
 Your veins of Cockney spirit, smile or mourn,
 According as you take things well or ill—
 Bold Britons, we are now on Shooter's Hill !

LXXXI.

The sun went down, the smoke rose up, as from
 A half-unquench'd volcano, o'er a space
 Which well beseem'd the "Devil's drawing-room,"
 As some have qualified that wondrous place.
 But Juan felt, though not approaching home,
 As one who, though he were not of the race,
 Revered the soil, of those true sons the mother,
 Who butcher'd half the earth, and bullied t' other.¹⁵

LXXXII.

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,
 Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye
 Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping
 In sight, then lost amidst the forestry
 Of masts ; a wilderness of steeples peeping
 On tiptoe, through their sea-coal canopy ;
 A huge dun cupola, like a foolscap crown
 On a fool's head—and there is London town !

LXXXIII.

But Juan saw not this : each wreath of smoke
 Appear'd to him but as the magic vapour
 Of some alchymic furnace, from whence broke
 The wealth of worlds (a wealth of tax and paper) ;
 The gloomy clouds, which o'er it as a yoke
 Are bow'd, and put the sun out like a taper,
 Were nothing but the natural atmosphere—
 Extremely wholesome, though but rarely clear.

LXXXIV.

He paused—and so will I ; as doth a crew
 Before they give their broadside. By and by,
 My gentle countrymen, we will renew
 Our old acquaintance, and at least I'll try
 To tell you truths *you* will not take as true,
 Because they are so,—a male Mrs. Fry,¹⁴
 With a soft besom will I sweep your halls,
 And brush a web or two from off the walls.

LXXXV.

Oh, Mrs. Fry! why go to Newgate? Why
 Preach to poor rogues? And wherefore not begin
 With Carlton, or with other houses? Try
 Your hand at harden'd and imperial sin.
 To mend the people's an absurdity,
 A jargon, a mere philanthropic din,
 Unless you make their betters better:—Fie!
 I thought you had more religion, Mrs. Fry.

LXXXVI.

Teach them the decencies of good threescore;
 Cure them of tours, Hussar and Highland dresses;
 Tell them that youth once gone returns no more,
 That hired huzzas redeem no land's distresses;
 Tell them Sir William Curtis is a bore,¹⁵
 Too dull even for the dullest of excesses—
 The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal,
 A fool whose bells have ceased to ring at all;—

LXXXVII.

Tell them, though it may be perhaps too late,
 On life's sworn confine, jaded, bloated, sated,
 To set up vain pretences of being great,
 'T is not so to be good; and be it stated,
 The worthiest kings have ever loved least state;
 And tell them—but you won't, and I have prated
 Just now enough; but by and by I'll prattle
 Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalles' battle.¹⁶

NOTES TO CANTO X.

Note 1. Stanza xi.

"I have read the recent article of Jeffrey [72d number of *Edinburgh Review*, "Don Juan"]. I suppose the long and short of it is that he wishes to provoke me to reply. But I won't, for I owe him a good turn still for his kindness by gone. Indeed I presume that the present opportunity of attacking me again was irresistible; and I can't blame him, knowing what human nature is."—*B. Letters*, June, 1822.

Note 2. Stanza xiii.

Reformers" or rather "Reformed." The Baron Bradwardine, in *Waverley*, is authority for the word.

Note 3. Stanza xv.

Query, *suit*?—PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Note 4. Stanza xviii.

The brig of Don, near the "auld toun" of Aberdeen, with its one arch and its black deep salmon stream below, is in my memory as yesterday. I still remember, though perhaps I may misquote, the awful proverb which made me pause to cross it, and yet lean over it with a childish delight, being an only son, at least by the mother's side. The saying, as recollected by me, was this—but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age:—

"Brig of Balgounie, *black's* your *wa'*,
Wi' a wife's *ae* son and a mear's *ae* foal
Doun ye shall fa'!"

["The correct reading of this legend is, I understand, as follows: —

'Brig of Balgounie, *wight* (strong) is thy *wa'*;
Wi' a wife's *ae* son on a mare's *ae* foal,
Down shalt thou fa'.'"—MOORE.]

Note 5. Stanza xix.

"Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood," &c.

Lay of the last Minstrel.

Note 6. Stanza xxxiv.

A metaphor taken from the "forty-horse power" of a steam-engine. That mad wag, the Reverend Sydney Smith, sitting by a brother clergyman at dinner, observed afterwards that his dull neighbour had a *twelve-parson power* of conversation.

Note 7. Stanza xxxvi.

"Hyde."—I believe a hyde of land to be a legitimate word, and as such subject to the tax of a quibble.

Note 8. Stanza xlii.

For an account of Dr. Baillie's visit to Lord Byron, see *ante*, p. 55, note 12.

Both Dr. Baillie and John Abernethy, the great surgeon, were remarkable for plainness of speech.—E.

Note 9. Stanza xlix.

The Empress went to the Crimea, accompanied by the Emperor Joseph, in the year—I forget which.

Note 10. Stanza lviii.

In the Empress Anne's time, Biren her favourite assumed the name and arms of the "Birons" of France, which families are yet extant with that of England. There are still the daughters of Courland of that name; one of them I remember seeing in England in the blessed year of the Allies (1814)—the Duchess of S.—to whom the English Duchess of Somerset presented me as a namesake.

Note 11. Stanza lix.

Napoleon's exclamation at the Elysée Bourbon, June 23, 1815.

Note 12. Stanza lxii.

St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins were still extant in 1816, and may be so yet as much as ever.

Note 13. Stanza lxxxi.

India. America.

Note 14. Stanza lxxxiv.

The Quaker lady whose benevolent exertions have effected so great a change in the condition of the female prisoners in Newgate.—E.

Note 15. Stanza lxxxvi.

This worthy alderman died in 1829.

Note 16. Stanza lxxxvii.

"O for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer
On Roncesvalles died."—*Marmion*.

CANTO XI.

I.

WHEN Bishop Berkeley said "there was no matter,"
 And proved it—'t was no matter what he said :
 They say his system 't is in vain to batter,
 Too subtle for the airiest human head ;
 And yet who can believe it? I would shatter
 Gladly all matters down to stone or lead,
 Or adamant, to find the world a spirit,
 And wear my head, denying that I wear it.

II.

What a sublime discovery 't was to make the
 Universe universal egotism,
 That all 's ideal—*all ourselves!* I 'll stake the
 World (be it what you will) that *that* 's no schism.
 Oh doubt!—if thou be'st doubt, for which some take thee,
 But which I doubt extremely—thou sole prism
 Of the truth's rays, spoil not my draught of spirit!
 Heaven's brandy, though our brain can hardly bear it.

III.

For ever and anon comes indigestion
 (Not the most "dainty Ariel"¹), and perplexes
 Our soarings with another sort of question :
 And that which, after all, my spirit vexes
 Is, that I find no spot where man can rest eye on,
 Without confusion of the sorts and sexes,
 Of beings, stars, and this unriddled wonder,
 The world, which at the worst 's a glorious blunder—

IV.

If it be chance ; or if it be according
 To the old text, still better ! lest it should
 Turn out so, we 'll say nothing 'gainst the wording,
 As several people think such hazards rude :
 They 're right ; our days are too brief for affording
 Space to dispute what *no one* ever could
 Decide, and *every body one day* will
 Know very clearly—or at last lie still.

V.

And therefore will I leave off metaphysical
 Discussion, which is neither here nor there :
 If I agree that what is, is—then this I call
 Being quite perspicuous and extremely fair.
 The truth is, I 've grown lately rather phthisical :
 I don't know what the reason is—the air,
 Perhaps ; but as I suffer from the shocks
 Of illness, I grow much more orthodox.

VI.

The first attack at once proved the Divinity
 (But *that* I never doubted, nor the devil) ;
 The next, the Virgin's mystical virginity ;
 The third, the usual origin of evil ;
 The fourth at once establish'd the whole Trinity
 On so incontrovertible a level,
 That I devoutly wish the three were four,
 On purpose to believe so much the more.

VII.

To our theme :—The man who has stood on the Acropolis,
 And look'd down over Attica ; or he
 Who has sail'd where picturesque Constantinople is,
 Or seen Tombuctoo, or hath taken tea
 In small-eyed China's crockery-ware metropolis,
 Or sat amidst the bricks of Nineveh,
 May not think much of London's first appearance—
 But ask him what he thinks of it a year hence ?

VIII.

Don Juan had got out on Shooter's Hill ;
 Sunset the time, the place the same declivity
 Which looks along that vale of good and ill,
 Where London streets ferment in full activity ;
 While every thing around was calm and still,
 Except the creak of wheels, which on their pivot he
 Heard,—and that bee-like, bubbling, busy hum
 Of cities, that boil over with their scum :—

IX.

I say, Don Juan, rapt in contemplation,
 Walk'd on behind his carriage, o'er the summit,
 And lost in wonder of so great a nation,
 Gave way to 't, since he could not overcome it.
 “ And here,” he cried, “ is freedom's chosen station ;
 Here peals the people's voice, nor can entomb it
 Racks, prisons, inquisitions ; resurrection
 Awaits it, each new meeting or election.

X.

“ Here are chaste wives, pure lives ; here people pay
 But what they please ; and if that things be dear,
 ’T is only that they love to throw away
 Their cash, to show how much they have a-year.
 Here laws are all inviolate ; none lay
 Traps for the traveller ; every highway ’s clear :
 Here——” he was interrupted by a knife,
 With “ Damn your eyes ! your money or your life.”

XI.

These freeborn sounds proceeded from four pads,
 In ambush laid, who had perceived him loiter
 Behind his carriage ; and, like handy lads,
 Had seized the lucky hour to reconnoitre,
 In which the heedless gentleman who gads
 Upon the road, unless he prove a fighter,
 May find himself, within that isle of riches,
 Exposed to lose his life as well as breeches.

XII.

Juan, who did not understand a word
 Of English, save their shibboleth, “ God damn !”
 And even that he had so rarely heard,
 He sometimes thought ’t was only their “ Salam,”
 Or “ God be with you !”—and ’t is not absurd
 To think so ; for, half English as I am
 (To my misfortune), never can I say
 I heard them wish “ God with you,” save that way :

XIII.

Juan yet quickly understood their gesture,
 And, being somewhat choleric and sudden,
 Drew forth a pocket-pistol from his vesture,
 And fired it into one assailant’s pudding—
 Who fell, as rolls an ox o’er in his pasture,
 And roar’d out, as he writhed his native mud in,
 Unto his nearest follower or henchman,
 “ Oh Jack ! I ’m floor’d by that ’ere bloody Frenchman !”

XIV.

On which Jack and his train set off at speed,
 And Juan’s suite, late scatter’d at a distance,
 Came up, all marvelling at such a deed,
 And offering, as usual, late assistance.
 Juan, who saw the moon’s late minion bleed
 As if his veins would pour out his existence,
 Stood calling out for bandages and lint,
 And wish’d he ’d been less hasty with his flint.

XV.

“Perhaps,” thought he, “it is the country’s wont
 To welcome foreigners in this way : now
 I recollect some innkeepers who don’t
 Differ, except in robbing with a bow,
 In lieu of a bare blade and brazen front.
 But what is to be done ? I can’t allow
 The fellow to lie groaning on the road :
 So take him up ; I’ll help you with the load.”

XVI.

But, ere they could perform this pious duty,
 The dying man cried, “Hold ! I’ve got my gruel !
 Oh ! for a glass of *max* !⁵ We’ve miss’d our booty ;
 Let me die where I am !” And, as the fuel
 Of life shrunk in his heart, and thick and sooty
 The drops fell from his death-wound, and he drew ill
 His breath, he from his swelling throat untied
 A kerchief, crying “Give Sal that !”—and died.

XVII.

The cravat, stain’d with bloody drops, fell down
 Before Don Juan’s feet : he could not tell
 Exactly why it was before him thrown,
 Nor what the meaning of the man’s farewell.
 Poor Tom was once a kiddy⁴ upon town,
 A thorough varmint, and a *real* swell,
 Full flash, all fancy, until fairly diddled—
 His pockets first, and then his body riddled.

XVIII.

Don Juan, having done the best he could
 In all the circumstances of the case,
 As soon as “crowner’s quest”⁵ allow’d, pursued
 His travels to the capital apace ;—
 Esteeming it a little hard he should
 In twelve hours’ time, and very little space,
 Have been obliged to slay a freeborn native
 In self-defence : this made him meditative.

XIX.

He from the world had cut off a great man,
 Who in his time had made heroic bustle.
 Who in a row like Tom could lead the van,
 Booze in the ken,⁶ or at the spellken hustle ?
 Who queer a flat ? Who (spite of Bow-street’s ban)
 On the high toby-spice so flash the muzzle ?
 Who on a lark, with black-eyed Sal (his blowing),
 So prime, so swell, so nutty, and so knowing ?⁷

XX.

But Tom 's no more—and so no more of Tom.

Heroes must die; and by God's blessing, 't is
Not long before the most of them go home.—

Hail! Themis, hail! Upon thy verge it is
That Juan's chariot, rolling like a drum

In thunder, holds the way it can't well miss,
Through Kennington and all the other "tons,"
Which make us wish ourselves in town at once;

XXI.

Through "groves," so call'd as being void of trees
(Like *lucus* from *no* light); through prospects named

Mount Pleasant, as containing nought to please,

Nor much to climb; through little boxes framed
Of bricks, to let the dust in at your ease,

With "To be let" upon their doors proclaim'd;
Through "rows" most modestly call'd "Paradise,"
Which Eve might quit without much sacrifice;

XXII.

Through coaches, drays, chok'd turnpikes, and a whirl

Of wheels, and roar of voices, and confusion;

Here taverns wooing to a pint of "purl,"⁸

There mails fast flying off like a delusion;

There barbers' blocks with periwigs in curl

In windows; here the lamp-lighter's infusion

Slowly distill'd into the glimmering glass—

(For in those days we had not got to gas);

XXIII.

Through this, and much, and more, is the approach

Of travellers to mighty Babylon:

Whether they come by horse, or chaise, or coach,

With slight exceptions, all the ways seem one.

I could say more, but do not chuse to encroach

Upon the guide-book's privilege. The sun

Had set some time, and night was on the ridge

Of twilight, as the party cross'd the bridge.

XXIV.

That 's rather fine, the gentle sound of Themis—

Who vindicates a moment too his stream—

Though hardly heard through multifarious "dam'mes."

The lamps of Westminster's more regular gleam;

The breadth of pavement, and yon shrine where Fame is

A spectral resident—whose pallid beam

In shape of moonshine hovers o'er the pile—

Make this a sacred part of Albion's isle.

XXV.

The Druids' groves are gone—so much the better :
 Stone-Henge is not—but what the devil is it?—
 But Bedlam still exists with its sage fetter,
 That madmen may not bite you on a visit ;
 The Bench too seats or suits full many a debtor ;
 The Mansion-house, too (though some people quiz it),
 To me appears a stiff yet grand erection ;
 But then the Abbey 's worth the whole collection.

XXVI.

The line of lights too up to Charing-Cross,
 Pall-Mall, and so forth, have a coruscation,
 Like gold as in comparison to dross,
 Match'd with the continent's illumination,
 Whose cities night by no means deigns to gloss.
 The French were not yet a lamp-lighting nation,
 And when they grew so—on their new-found lantern,
 Instead of wicks, they made a wicked man turn.

XXVII.

A row of gentlemen along the streets
 Suspended, may illuminate mankind,
 As also bonfires made of country-seats ;
 But the old way is best for the purblind :
 The other looks like phosphorus on sheets,
 A sort of ignis fatuus to the mind,
 Which, though 't is certain to perplex and frighten,
 Must burn more mildly ere it can enlighten.

XXVIII.

But London 's so well lit, that if Diogenes
 Could recommence to hunt his *honest man*,
 And found him not amidst the various progenies
 Of this enormous city's spreading spawn,
 'T were not for want of lamps to aid his dodging his
 Yet undiscover'd treasure. What *I* can,
 I 've done to find the same throughout life's journey,
 But see the world is only one attorney.

XXIX.

Over the stones still rattling, up Pall-Mall,
 Through crowds and carriages—but waxing thinner
 As thunder'd knockers broke the long-seal'd spell
 Of doors 'gainst duns, and to an early dinner
 Admitted a small party as night fell,—
 Don Juan, our young diplomatic sinner,
 Pursued his path, and drove past some hotels,
 St. James's Palace and St. James's "Hells." 9

XXX.

They reach'd the hotel; forth stream'd from the front door
 A tide of well-clad waiters, and around
 The mob stood, and as usual several score
 Of those pedestrian Paphians who abound
 In decent London, when the daylight 's o'er;
 Commodious but immoral, they are found
 Useful, like Malthus, in promoting marriage:
 But Juan now is stepping from his carriage

XXXI.

Into one of the sweetest of hotels,
 Especially for foreigners—and mostly
 For those whom favour or whom fortune swells,
 And cannot find a bill's small items costly.
 There many an envoy either dwelt or dwells
 (The den of many a diplomatic lost lie),
 Until to some conspicuous square they pass,
 And blazon o'er the door their names in brass.

XXXII.

Juan, whose was a delicate commission,
 Private, though publicly important, bore
 No title to point out with due precision
 The exact affair on which he was sent o'er:
 'T was merely known that on a secret mission
 A foreigner of rank had graced our shore,
 Young, handsome, and accomplish'd, who was said
 (In whispers) to have turn'd his sovereign's head.

XXXIII.

Some rumour also of some strange adventures
 Had gone before him, and his wars and loves;
 And as romantic heads are pretty painters,
 And above all, an Englishwoman's roves
 Into the excursive, breaking the indentures
 Of sober reason, wheresoe'er it moves,
 He found himself extremely in the fashion,
 Which serves our thinking people for a passion.

XXXIV.

I don't mean that they are passionless, but quite
 The contrary; but then 't is in the head;
 Yet, as the consequences are as bright
 As if they acted with the heart instead,
 What after all can signify the site
 Of ladies' lucubrations? So they lead
 In safety to the place for which they start,
 What matters if the road be head or heart?

XXXV.

Juan presented in the proper place,
 To proper placemen, every Russ credential;
 And was received with all the due grimace,
 By those who govern in the mood potential,
 Who, seeing a handsome stripling with smooth face,
 Thought (what in state affairs is most essential)
 That they as easily might *do* the youngster,
 As hawks may pounce upon a woodland songster.

XXXVI.

They err'd, as aged men will do; but by
 And by we 'll talk of that; and if we don't,
 'T will be because our notion is not high
 Of politicians and their double front,
 Who live by lies, yet dare not boldly lie:—
 Now what I love in women is, they won't
 Or can't do otherwise than lie, but do it
 So well, the very truth seems falsehood to it.

XXXVII.

And, after all, what is a lie? 'T is but
 The truth in masquerade; and I defy
 Historians, heroes, lawyers, priests, to put
 A fact without some leaven of a lie.
 The very shadow of true truth would shut
 Up annals, revelations, poesy,
 And prophecy—except it should be dated
 Some years before the incidents related.

XXXVIII.

Praised be all liars and all lies! Who now
 Can tax my mild Muse with misanthropy?
 She rings the world's "Te Deum," and her brow
 Blushes for those who will not:—but to sigh
 Is idle; let us, like most others, bow,
 Kiss hands, feet—any part of Majesty,
 After the good example of "Green Erin,"
 Whose shamrock now seems rather worse for wearing.

XXXIX.

Don Juan was presented, and his dress
 And mien excited general admiration—
 I don't know which was most admired or less:
 One monstrous diamond drew much observation,
 Which Catherine, in a moment of "ivresse"
 (In love or brandy's fervent fermentation),
 Bestow'd upon him as the public learn'd;
 And, to say truth, it had been fairly earn'd.

XL.

Besides the ministers and underlings,
 Who must be courteous to the accredited
 Diplomats of rather wavering kings,
 Until their royal riddle 's fully read,
 The very clerks—those somewhat dirty springs
 Of office, or the house of office, fed
 By foul corruption into streams—even they
 Were hardly rude enough to earn their pay :

XLI.

And insolence no doubt is what they are
 Employ'd for, since it is their daily labour
 In the dear offices of peace or war ;
 And should you doubt, pray ask of your next neighbour,
 When for a passport, or some other bar
 To freedom, he applied (a grief and a bore)
 If he found not this spawn of tax-born riches,
 Like lap-dogs, the least civil sons of b——s.

XLII.

But Juan was received with much "empressement :"—
 These phrases of refinement I must borrow
 From our next neighbours' land, where, like a chessman,
 There is a move set down for joy or sorrow,
 Not only in mere talking, but the press. Man,
 In islands is, it seems, downright and thorough,
 More than on continents—as if the sea
 (See Billingsgate) made even the tongue more free.

XLIII.

And yet the British "dam'me" 's rather Attic :
 Your continental oaths are but incontinent,
 And turn on things which no aristocratic
 Spirit would name, and therefore even I won't anent "
 This subject quote, as it would be schismatic
 In politesse, and have a sound affronting in 't :—
 But "dam'me" 's quite ethereal, though too daring—
 Platonic blasphemy, the soul of swearing.

XLIV.

For downright rudeness ye may stay at home ;
 For true or false politeness (and scarce *that*
Now) you may cross the blue deep and white foam—
 The first the emblem (rarely though) of what
 You leave behind, the next of much you come
 To meet. However, 't is no time to chat
 On general topics : poems must confine
 Themselves to unity, like this of mine.

XLV.

In the great world,—which, being interpreted,
 Meaneth the west or worst end of a city,
 And about twice two thousand people bred
 By no means to be very wise or witty,
 But to sit up while others lie in bed,
 And look down on the universe with pity—
 Juan, as an inveterate patrician,
 Was well received by persons of condition.

XLVI.

He was a bachelor, which is a matter
 Of import both to virgin and to bride,
 The former's hymeneal hopes to flatter ;
 And (should she not hold fast by love or pride)
 'T is also of some moment to the latter :
 A rib 's a thorn in a wed gallant's side,
 Requires decorum, and is apt to double
 The horrid sin—and, what 's still worse, the trouble.

XLVII.

But Juan was a bachelor—of arts,
 And parts, and hearts : he danced and sung, and had
 An air as sentimental as Mozart's
 Softest of melodies ; and could be sad
 Or cheerful, without any “flaws or starts,”
 Just at the proper time ; and, though a lad,
 Had seen the world—which is a curious sight,
 And very much unlike what people write.

XLVIII.

Fair virgins blush'd upon him ; wedded dames
 Bloom'd also in less transitory hues ;
 For both commodities dwell by the Thames,
 The painting and the painted ; youth, ceruse,
 Against his heart preferr'd their usual claims,
 Such as no gentleman can quite refuse ;
 Daughters admired his dress, and pious mothers
 Inquired his income, and if he had brothers.

XLIX.

The milliners who furnish “drapery misses”¹²
 Throughout the season, upon speculation
 Of payment ere the honeymoon's last kisses
 Have waned into a crescent's coruscation,
 Thought such an opportunity as this is,
 Of a rich foreigner's initiation,
 Not to be overlook'd, and gave such credit,
 That future bridegrooms swore, and sigh'd, and paid it.

L.

The Blues, that tender tribe, who sigh o'er sonnets,
 And with the pages of the last review
 Line the interior of their heads or bonnets,
 Advanced in all their azure's highest hue :
 They talk'd bad French or Spanish, and upon its
 Late authors ask'd him for a hint or two ;
 And which was softest, Russian or Castilian ?
 And whether in his travels he saw Ilion ?

LI.

Juan, who was a little superficial,
 And not in literature a great Drawcansir,
 Examined by this learned and especial
 Jury of matrons, scarce knew what to answer :
 His duties warlike, loving, or official,
 His steady application as a dancer,
 Had kept him from the brink of Hippocrene,
 Which now he found was blue instead of green.

LII.

However, he replied at hazard, with
 A modest confidence and calm assurance,
 Which lent his learned lucubrations pith,
 And pass'd for arguments of good endurance.
 That prodigy, Miss Araminta Smith
 (Who, at sixteen, translated "Hercules Furens"
 Into as furious English), with her best look,
 Set down his sayings in her common-place book.

LIII.

Juan knew several languages—as well
 He might—and brought them up with skill, in time
 To save his fame with each accomplish'd belle,
 Who still regretted that he did not rhyme ;
 There wanted but this requisite to swell
 His qualities (with them) into sublime :
 Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Mannish,
 Both long'd extremely to be sung in Spanish.

LIV.

However, he did pretty well, and was
 Admitted as an aspirant to all
 The *coteries*, and, as in Banquo's glass,
 At great assemblies or in parties small,
 He saw ten thousand living authors pass,
 That being about their average numeral ;
 Also the eighty "greatest living poets,"
 As every paltry magazine can show *it's*.

LV.

In twice five years the "greatest living poet,"
 Like to the champion in the fisty ring,
 Is call'd on to support his claim, or show it,
 Although 't is an imaginary thing.
 Even I—albeit I 'm sure I did not know it,
 Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king,—
 Was reckon'd, a considerable time,
 The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.

LVI.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero
 My Leipsic, and my Mont-Saint-Jean seems Cain:
 "La Belle Alliance" of dunces down at zero,
 Now that the lion 's fall'n, may rise again:
 But I will fall at least as fell my hero;
 Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign;
 Or to some lonely isle of jailors go,
 With turncoat Southey for my turnkey Lowe.

LVII.

Sir Walter reign'd before me; Moore and Campbell
 Before and after; but now grown more holy,
 The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble
 With poets almost clergymen or wholly;
 And Pegasus hath a psalmodic amble
 Beneath the very Reverend Rowley Powley,
 Who shoes the glorious animal with stilts,
 A modern Ancient Pistol—by the hilts!

LVIII.

* * * * *

[This stanza was left blank in the printed copies, like some others restored for the first time in the present edition; but no MS. of the eleventh Canto having been preserved by the publisher, the verses suppressed in this place, are to be considered as lost for ever.—E.]

LIX.

Then there 's my gentle Euphues, who, they say,
 Sets up for being a sort of *moral me*; ¹³
 He 'll find it rather difficult some day
 To turn out both, or either, it may be.
 Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway;
 And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;
 And that deep-mouth'd Bœotian, "Savage Landor," ¹⁴
 Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander.

LX.

John Keats—who was kill'd off by one critique,
 Just as he really promised something great,
 If not intelligible,—without Greek
 Contrived to talk about the gods of late,
 Much as they might have been supposed to speak.
 Poor fellow! his was an untoward fate:
 'T is strange the mind, that very fiery particle,⁵
 Should let itself be snuff'd out by an article.

LXI.

The list grows long of live and dead pretenders
 To that which none will gain—or none will know
 The conqueror at least; who, ere Time renders
 His last award, will have the long grass grow
 Above his burnt-out brain and sapless cinders.
 If I might augur, I should rate but low
 Their chances; they're too numerous, like the thirty
 Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd but dirty.

LXII.

This is the literary *lower* empire,
 Where the Prætorian bands take up the matter;—
 A “dreadful trade,” like his who “gathers samphire,”¹⁶
 The insolent soldiery to soothe and flatter,
 With the same feelings as you'd coax a vampire.
 Now, were I once at home, and in good satire,
 I'd try conclusions with those janizaries,
 And show them *what* an intellectual war is.

LXIII.

I think I know a trick or two would turn
 Their flanks;—but it is hardly worth my while
 With such small gear to give myself concern:
 Indeed I've not the necessary bile;
 My natural temper's really aught but stern,
 And even my Muse's worst reproof's a smile;
 And then she drops a brief and modest curtsey,
 And glides away, assured she never hurts ye.

LXIV.

My Juan, whom I left in deadly peril
 Amongst live poets and blue ladies, pass'd
 With some small profit through that field so sterile.
 Being tired in time, and neither least nor last,
 Left it before he had been treated very ill;
 And henceforth found himself more gaily class'd
 Amongst the higher spirits of the day,
 The sun's true son—no vapour, but a ray.

LXV.

His morns he pass'd in business—which, dissected,
 Was like all business, a laborious nothing,
 That leads to lassitude, the most infected,
 And centaur Nessus garb of mortal clothing,
 And on our sofas makes us lie dejected,
 And talk in tender horrors of our loathing
 All kinds of toil, save for our country's good—
 Which grows no better, though 't is time it should.

LXVI.

His afternoons he pass'd in visits, luncheons,
 Lounging, and boxing; and the twilight hour
 In riding round those vegetable puncheons
 Call'd "Parks," where there is neither fruit nor flower
 Enough to gratify a bee's slight munchings;
 But after all it is the only "bower"
 (In Moore's phrase) where the fashionable fair
 Can form a slight acquaintance with fresh air.

LXVII.

Then dress, then dinner, then awakes the world!
 Then glare the lamps, then whirl the wheels, then roar
 Through street and square fast-flashing chariots, hurl'd
 Like harness'd meteors; then along the floor
 Chalk mimics painting; then festoons are twirl'd;
 Then roll the brazen thunders of the door
 Which opens to the thousand happy few
 An earthly paradise of "or molu."

LXVIII.

There stands the noble hostess, nor shall sink
 With the three-thousandth curtsey; there the waltz—
 The only dance which teaches girls to think—
 Makes one in love even with its very faults.
 Saloon, room, hall, o'erflow beyond their brink,
 And long the latest of arrivals halts,
 'Midst royal dukes and dames condemn'd to climb,
 And gain an inch of staircase at a time.

LXIX.

Thrice happy he who, after a survey
 Of the good company, can win a corner,
 A door that 's *in*, or boudoir *out* of the way,
 Where he may fix himself, like small "Jack Horner,"
 And let the Babel round run as it may,
 And look on as a mourner, or a scorner,
 Or an approver, or a mere spectator,
 Yawning a little as the night grows later.

LXX.

But this won't do, save by and by ; and he
 Who, like Don Juan, takes an active share,
 Must steer with care through all that glittering sea
 Of gems and plumes, and pearls and silks, to where
 He deems it is his proper place to be ;
 Dissolving in the waltz to some soft air,
 Or prouder prancing with mercurial skill
 Where science marshals forth her own quadrille.

LXXI.

Or, if he dance not, but hath higher views
 Upon an heiress, or his neighbour's bride,
 Let him take care that that which he pursues
 Is not at once too palpably descried.
 Full many an eager gentleman oft rues
 His haste : impatience is a blundering guide
 Amongst a people famous for reflection,
 Who like to play the fool with circumspection.

LXXII.

But, if you can contrive, get next at supper ;
 Or, if forestall'd, get opposite and ogle :—
 Oh ye ambrosial moments ! always upper
 In mind, a sort of sentimental bogle,
 Which sits for ever upon memory's crupper,
 The ghost of vanish'd pleasures once in vogue ! Ill
 Can tender souls relate the rise and fall
 Of hopes and fears which shake a single ball.

LXXIII.

But these precautionary hints can touch
 Only the common run, who must pursue,
 And watch, and ward ; whose plans a word too much
 Or little overturns ; and not the few
 Or many (for the number 's sometimes such)
 Whom a good mien, especially if new,
 Or fame, or name, for wit, war, sense, or nonsense,
 Permits whate'er they please, or *did* not long since.

LXXIV.

Our hero, as a hero, young and handsome,
 Noble, rich, celebrated, and a stranger,
 Like other slaves of course must pay his ransom
 Before he can escape from so much danger
 As will environ a conspicuous man. Some
 Talk about poetry, and "rack and manger,"
 And ugliness, disease, as toil and trouble ;—
 I wish they knew the life of a young noble.

LXXV.

They 're young, but know not youth—it is anticipated;
 Handsome but wasted, rich without a sou;
 Their vigour in a thousand arms is dissipated;
 Their cash comes *from*, their wealth goes *to*, a Jew;
 Both senates see their nightly votes participated
 Between the tyrant's and the tribune's crew;
 And, having voted, dined, drank, gamed, and whored,
 The family vault receives another lord.

LXXVI.

“Where is the world,” cries Young, “at *eighty*?¹⁸ Where
 The world in which a man was born!” Alas!
 Where is the world of *eight* years past? ‘*T was there—*
 I look for it—’t is gone, a globe of glass!
 Crack’d, shiver’d, vanish’d, scarcely gazed on, ere
 A silent change dissolves the glittering mass.
 Statesmen, chiefs, orators, queens, patriots, kings,
 And dandies, all are gone on the wind’s wings.

LXXVII.

Where is Napoleon the Grand? God knows:
 Where little Castlereagh? The devil can tell:
 Where Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, all those
 Who bound the bar or senate in their spell?
 Where is the unhappy queen, with all her woes?
 And where the daughter, whom the isles loved we
 Where are those martyr’d saints, the five per cents?
 And where—oh where the devil are the rents?

LXXVIII.

Where’s Brummel? Dish’d. Where’s Long Pole Wellesley? Diddled.
 Where’s Whitbread? Romilly? Where’s George the Third?
 Where is his will?¹⁹ (That’s not so soon unriddled.)
 And where is “Fum” the Fourth, our “royal bird?”
 Gone down, it seems, to Scotland, to be fiddled
 Unto by Sawney’s violin, we have heard:
 “Caw me, caw thee”—for six months hath been hatching
 This scene of royal itch and loyal scratching.

LXXIX.

Where is Lord This? And where my Lady That?
 The Honourable Mistresses and Misses?
 Some laid aside like an old opera-hat,
 Married, unmarried, and remarried—(this is
 An evolution oft perform’d of late).
 Where are the Dublin shouts—and London hisses?
 Where are the Grenvilles? Turn’d, as usual. Where
 My friends the whigs? Exactly where they were.

LXXX.

Where are the Lady Carolines and Franceses?
 Divorced or doing thereanent. Ye annals
 So brilliant, where the list of routs and dances is—
 Thou Morning Post, sole record of the panels
 Broken in carriages, and all the phantasies
 Of fashion—say what streams now fill those channels?
 Some die, some fly, some languish on the continent,
 Because the times have hardly left them one tenant.

LXXXI.

Some who once set their caps at cautious dukes,
 Have taken up at length with younger brothers;
 Some heiresses have bit at sharpers' hooks;
 Some maids have been made wives—some merely mothers;
 Others have lost their fresh and fairy looks;
 In short, the list of alterations bothers.
 There's little strange in this, but something strange is
 The unusual quickness of these common changes.

LXXXII.

Talk not of seventy years as age; in seven
 I've seen more changes, down from monarchs to
 The humblest individual under heaven,
 Than might suffice a moderate century through.
 I knew that nought was lasting, but now even
 Change grows too changeable, without being new:
 Nought's permanent among the human race,
 Except the whigs *not* getting into place.

LXXXIII.

I've seen Napoleon, who seem'd quite a Jupiter,
 Shrink to a Saturn. I have seen a duke
 (No matter which) turn politician stupider,
 If that can well be, than his wooden look.
 But it is time that I should hoist my "blue Peter,"
 And sail for a new theme: I've seen—and shook
 To see it—the king hiss'd, and then carest;
 But don't pretend to settle which was best.

LXXXIV.

I've seen the landholders without a rap—
 I've seen Johanna Southcote—I have seen
 The House of Commons turn'd to a tax-trap—
 I've seen that sad affair of the late queen—
 I've seen crowns worn instead of a fool's cap—
 I've seen a congress doing all that's mean—
 I've seen some nations, like o'erloaded asses,
 Kick off their burthens—meaning the high classes.

LXXXV.

I 've seen small poets, and great prozers, and
 Interminable—*not eternal*—speakers—
 I 've seen the funds at war with house and land—
 I 've seen the country gentlemen turn squeakers—
 I 've seen the people ridden o'er like sand
 By slaves on horseback—I have seen malt liquors
 Exchanged for “thin potations” by John Bull—²¹
 I 've seen John half detect himself a fool.

LXXXVI.

But “carpe diem,” Juan, “carpe, carpe !” ²²
 To-morrow sees another race as gay
 And transient, and devour'd by the same harpy.
 “Life 's a poor player,”—then “play out the play,” ²³
 Ye villains !” and, above all, keep a sharp eye
 Much less on what you do than what you say :
 Be hypocritical, be cautious, be
 Not what you *seem*, but always what you *see*.

LXXXVII.

But how shall I relate in other cantos
 Of what befel our hero, in the land
 Which 't is the common cry and lie to vaunt as
 A moral country ? But I hold my hand—
 For I disdain to write an Atalantis ; ²⁴
 But 't is as well at once to understand,
 You 're *not* a moral people, and you know it
 Without the aid of too sincere a poet.

LXXXVIII.

What Juan saw and underwent shall be
 My topic, with of course the due restriction
 Which is required by proper courtesy ;
 And recollect the work is only fiction,
 And that I sing of neither mine nor me,
 Though every scribe, in some slight turn of diction,
 Will hint allusions never *meant*. Ne'er doubt
 This—when I speak, I *don't hint*, but *speak out*.

LXXXIX.

Whether he married with the third or fourth
 Offspring of some sage, husband-hunting countess,
 Or whether with some virgin of more worth
 (I mean in fortune's matrimonial bounties)
 He took to regularly peopling earth,
 Of which your lawful awful wedlock fount is—
 Or whether he was taken in for damages,
 For being too excursive in his homages—

XC.

Is yet within the unread events of time.

Thus far, go forth, thou lay, which I will back
Against the same given quantity of rhyme,

For being as much the subject of attack

As ever yet was any work sublime,

By those who love to say that white is black.

So much the better!—I may stand alone,

But would not change my free thoughts for a throne.

NOTES TO CANTO XI.

Note 1. Stanza iii.

"*Prosp.* Why, that's my dainty Ariel."—SHAKESPEARE'S *Tempest*.

Note 2. Stanza xiv.

"*Falstaff.* Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon: and let men say, we be men of good government; being governed as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we—steal."
—Henry V.

Note 3. Stanza xvi.

Gin or Hollands.

Note 4. Stanza xvii.

Kiddy—a thief of the lower order, who, when he is breeched by a course of successful depredation, dresses in the extreme of vulgar gentility, and affects knowingness in his air and conversation.—VAUX.

Any well-dressed person is emphatically called a *swell*, or a *real swell*.—EGAN.

A fellow who affects any particular habit, as swearing, dressing in a particular manner, taking snuff, &c. merely to be noticed, is said to do it out of *flash*.—EGAN.

Note 5. Stanza xviii.

"*2d Clown.* But is this law?

1st Clown. Ay marry is't; crowner's quest law."—Hamlet.

Note 6. Stanza xix.

Ken—a house that harbours thieves.

Spellken—play-house.

To queer a flat—to puzzle or confound a gull.

High toby-spice—robbery on horseback.

Lark—fun or sport of any kind.

Blowing—a pick-pocket's trull.

Swell—gentlemanly.

Nutty—to be nuts upon is to be very much pleased, or gratified with, any thing: thus a person who conceives a strong inclination for another of the opposite sex is said to be quite *nutty* upon him or her.—*Slang dictionary*.

Note 7. Stanza xix.

The advance of science and of language has rendered it unnecessary to translate the above good and true English, spoken in its original purity by the select mobility and their patrons. The following is a stanza of a song which was very popular, at least in my early days:—

On the high toby-spice flash the muzzle,
In spite of each gallows old scout;
If you at the spellken can't hustle,
You 'll be hobbled in making a clout.

Then your blowing will wax gallows haughty,
When she hears of your scaly mistake,
She 'll surely turn snitch for the forty,
That her Jack may be regular weight.

If there be any gemman so ignorant as to require a traduction, I refer him to my old friend and corporeal pastor and master, John Jackson, Esq., Professor of pugilism; who, I trust, still retains the strength and symmetry of his model of a form, together with his good humour, and athletic as well as mental accomplishments.

Note 8. Stanza xxii.

A medicated malt liquor, in which wormwood and aromatics are infused.—TODD.

Note 9. Stanza xxix.

"Hells," gaming-houses. What their number may now be in this life, I know not. Before I was of age I knew them pretty accurately, both "gold" and "silver." I was once nearly called out by an acquaintance, because when he asked me where I thought that his soul would be found hereafter, I answered, "In Silver Hell."

Note 10. Stanza xliii.

"Anent" was a Scotch phrase meaning "concerning,"—"with regard to." It has been made English by the Scotch Novels; and, as the Frenchman said—"If it be not, ought to be English."

Note 11. Stanza xlvii.

—"Oh, these flaws, and starts,
(Impostors to true fears), would well become
A woman's story, &c."—*Macbeth*.

Note 12. Stanza xlix.

"Drapery misses." This term is probably any thing now but a *mystery*. It was, however, almost so to me when I first returned from the East in 1811—1812. It means, a pretty, a high-born, a fashionable young female, well instructed by her friends, and furnished by her milliner with a wardrobe upon credit, to be repaid, when married, by the husband. The riddle was first read to me by a young and pretty heiress, on my praising the "drapery" of an "untochered" but "pretty virginities" (like Mrs. Anne Page) of the *then* day, which has now been some years yesterday; she assured me that the thing was common in London; and as her own thousands, and blooming looks, and rich simplicity of array, put any suspicion in her own case out of the question, I confess I gave some credit to the allegation. If necessary, authorities might be cited, in which case I could quote both "drapery" and the wearers. Let us hope, however, that it is now obsolete.

Note 13. Stanza lix.

Some reviewer had bestowed the title of "a Moral Byron" on Mr. Bryan Procter (Barry Cornwall).

Note 14. Stanza lix.

See *post*, preface to the "Vision of Judgment."

Note 15. Stanza lxi.

"Divinæ particulam auræ."

Note 16. Stanza lxii.

—"Half-way down
Hangs one that gathers samohire; dreadful trade!"—*Lear*.

Note 17. Stanza lxxii.

Scotch for goblin.

Note 18. Stanza lxxvi.

Young was more than eighty years old when he published his poem, entitled "Resignation," &c.—E.

Note 19. Stanza lxxviii.

The old story of the will of George I., said to have been destroyed by George II. No such calumny was ever heard of as to George III.—E.

Note 20. Stanza lxxvii.

See Moore's "Fum and Hum, the Two Birds of Royalty," appended to his "Fudge Family."—E.

Note 21. Stanza lxxxv.

"If I had a thousand sons, the first human principle I would teach them should be to forswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack."—SHAKESPEARE, *Henry IV.*

Note 22. Stanza lxxxvi.

"Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero."—HOR.

Note 23. Stanza lxxxvi.

"Out, you rogue! play out the play."—*Henry IV.*

Note 24. Stanza lxxxvii.

The "New Atalantis, or Memoirs and Manners of several Persons of Quality,"—a work in which the authoress, Mrs. Manley, makes very free with many distinguished characters of her day. It is alluded to by Pope in the "Rape of the Lock," and by Swift in his ballad on Corinna.—E.

CANTO XII.

I.

Of all the barbarous middle ages, that
 Which is most barbarous is the middle age
 Of man ; it is—I really scarce know what ;
 But when we hover between fool and sage,
 And don't know justly what we would be at—
 A period something like a printed page,
 Black letter upon foolscap, while our hair
 Grows grizzled, and we are not what we were ;—

II.

Too old for youth—too young, at thirty-five,
 To herd with boys, or hoard with good threescore—
 I wonder people should be left alive ;
 But, since they are, that epoch is a bore :
 Love lingers still, although 't were late to wive ;
 And as for other love, the illusion 's o'er ;
 And money, that most pure imagination,
 Gleams only through the dawn of its creation.

III.

Oh gold ! why call we misers miserable ?
 Theirs is the pleasure that can never pall,
 Theirs is the best bower-anchor, the chain-cable
 Which holds fast other pleasures great and small.
 Ye who but see the saving man at table,
 And scorn his temperate board, as none at all,
 And wonder how the wealthy can be sparing,
 Know not what visions spring from each cheese-paring.

IV.

Love or lust makes man sick, and wine much sicker ;
 Ambition rends, and gaming gains a loss ;
 But making money, slowly first, then quicker,
 And adding still a little through each cross
 (Which *will* come over things), beats love or liquor,
 The gamester's counter, or the statesman's dross.
 Oh gold ! I still prefer thee unto paper,
 Which makes bank credit like a bark of vapour.

V.

Who hold the balance of the world? Who reign
 O'er congress, whether royalist or liberal?
 Who rouse the shirtless patriots of Spain
 (That make old Europe's journals squeak and gibber all)?
 Who keep the world, both old and new, in pain
 Or pleasure? Who make politics run glibber all?
 The shade of Bonaparte's noble daring?—
 Jew Rothschild, and his fellow—christian Baring.

VI.

Those, and the truly liberal Lafitte,
 Are the true lords of Europe. Every loan
 Is not a merely speculative hit,
 But seats a nation or upsets a throne.
 Republics also get involved a bit;
 Columbia's stock hath holders not unknown
 On 'Change; and even thy silver soil, Peru,
 Must get itself discounted by a Jew.

VII.

Why call the miser miserable? as
 I said before: the frugal life is his,
 Which in a saint or cynic ever was
 The theme of praise: a hermit would not miss
 Canonization for the self-same cause,
 And wherefore blame gaunt wealth's austerities?
 Because, you'll say, nought calls for such a trial;—
 Then there's more merit in his self-denial.

VIII.

He is your only poet;—passion, pure
 And sparkling on from heap to heap, displays,
Possess'd, the ore, of which *mere hopes* allure
 Nations athwart the deep: the golden rays
 Flash up in ingots from the mine obscure;
 On him the diamond pours its brilliant blaze;
 While the mild emerald's beam shades down the dyes
 Of other stones, to soothe the miser's eyes.

IX.

The lands on either side are his; the ship
 From Ceylon, Inde, or far Cathay, unloads
 For him the fragrant produce of each trip;
 Beneath his cars of Ceres groan the roads,
 And the vine blushes like Aurora's lip;
 His very cellars might be kings' abodes,
 While he, despising every sensual call,
 Commands—the intellectual lord of all.

X.

Perhaps he hath great projects in his mind,
 To build a college, or to found a race,
 An hospital, a church,—and leave behind
 Some dome surmounted by his meagre face :
 Perhaps he fain would liberate mankind
 Even with the very ore which makes them base ;
 Perhaps he would be wealthiest of his nation,
 Or revel in the joys of calculation.

XI.

But whether all, or each, or none of these,
 May be the hoarder's principle of action,
 The fool will call such mania a disease :—
 What is his *own*? Go—look at each transaction,
 Wars, revels, loves—do these bring men more ease
 Than the mere plodding through each “vulgar fraction?”
 Or do they benefit mankind? Lean miser!
 Let spendthrifts' heirs inquire of yours—who 's wiser?

XII.

How beauteous are rouleaus ! how charming chests
 Containing ingots, bags of dollars, coins,
 Not of old victors (all whose heads and crests
 Weigh not the thin ore where their visage shines,
 But) of fine unclipp'd gold, where dully rests
 Some likeness which the glittering cirque confines,
 Of modern, reigning, sterling, stupid stamp :—
 Yes! ready money is Aladdin's lamp.

XIII.

“ Love rules the camp, the court, the grove,”—“ for love
 Is heaven, and heaven is love :”—so sings the bard ;¹
 Which it were rather difficult to prove
 (A thing with poetry in general hard).
 Perhaps there may be something in “ the grove,”
 At least it rhymes to “ love,” but I 'm prepared
 To doubt (no less than landlords of their rental)
 If “ courts” and “ camps” be quite so sentimental.

XIV.

But if love don't, *cash* does, and cash alone ;
 Cash rules the grove, and fells it too besides ;
 Without cash, camps were thin, and courts were none ;
 Without cash, Malthus tells you—“ take no brides.”
 So cash rules love the ruler, on his own
 High ground, as Virgin Cynthia sways the tides ;
 And, as for “ heaven being love,” why not say honey
 Is wax? Heaven is not love, 't is matrimony.

XV.

Is not all love prohibited whatever,
 Excepting marriage? which is love, no doubt,
 After a sort; but somehow people never
 With the same thought the two words have help'd out:
 Love may exist *with* marriage, and *should* ever,
 And marriage also may exist without;
 But love *sans* bans is both a sin and shame,
 And ought to go by quite another name.

XVI.

Now if the "court" and "camp" and "grove" be not
 Recruited all with constant married men,
 Who never coveted their neighbour's lot,
 I say *that* line's a lapsus of the pen;—
 Strange too in my "buon camerado" Scott,
 So celebrated for his morals, when
 My Jeffrey held him up as an example
 To me;—of which these morals are a sample.³

XVII.

Well, if I don't succeed, I *have* succeeded,
 And that's enough; succeeded in my youth,
 The only time when much success is needed:
 And my success produced what I in sooth
 Cared most about; it need not now be pleaded—
 Whate'er it was, 't was mine; I've paid, in truth,
 Of late, the penalty of such success,
 But have not learn'd to wish it any less.

XVIII.

That suit in Chancery,—which some persons plead
 In an appeal to the unborn, whom they,
 In the faith of their procreative creed,
 Baptize posterity, or future clay,—
 To me seems but a dubious kind of reed
 To lean on for support in any way;
 Since odds are that posterity will know
 No more of them, than they of her, I trow.

XIX.

Why, I'm posterity—and so are you;
 And whom do we remember? Not a hundred.
 Were every memory written down all true,
 The tenth or twentieth name would be but blunder'd:
 Even Plutarch's Lives have but pick'd out a few,
 And 'gainst those few your annalists have thunder'd;
 And Mitford, in the nineteenth century,
 Gives, with Greek truth, the good old Greek the lie.⁴

XX.

Good people all, of every degree,
 Ye gentle readers and ungentle writers,
 In this twelfth canto 't is my wish to be
 As serious as if I had for inditers
 Malthus and Wilberforce : the last set free
 The negroes, and is worth a million fighters ;
 While Wellington has but enslaved the whites,
 And Malthus does the thing 'gainst which he writes.

XXI.

I 'm serious—so are all men upon paper :
 And why should I not form my speculation,
 And hold up to the sun my little taper ?
 Mankind just now seem rapt in meditation
 On constitutions and steam-boats of vapour ;
 While sages write against all procreation,
 Unless a man can calculate his means
 Of feeding brats the moment his wife weans.

XXII.

That 's noble ! that 's romantic ! For my part,
 I think that " philo-genitiveness " is—
 (Now here 's a word quite after my own heart,
 Though there 's a shorter a good deal than this,
 If that politeness set it not apart ;
 But I 'm resolved to say nought that 's amiss)—
 I say, methinks that " philo-genitiveness "
 Might meet from men a little more forgiveness.

XXIII.

And now to business. Oh, my gentle Juan !
 Thou art in London—in that pleasant place
 Where every kind of mischief 's daily brewing,
 Which can await warm youth in its wild race.
 'T is true, that thy career is not a new one,
 Thou art no novice in the headlong chase
 Of early life ; but this is a new land,
 Which foreigners can never understand.

XXIV.

What with a small diversity of climate,
 Of hot or cold, mercurial or sedate,
 I could send forth my mandate like a primate,
 Upon the rest of Europe's social state ;
 But thou art the most difficult to rhyme at,
 Great Britain, which the Muse may penetrate :
 All countries have their " lions," but in thee
 There is but one superb menagerie.

XXV.

But I am sick of politics. Begin,
 "Paulo majora." Juan, undecided
 Amongst the paths of being "taken in,"
 Above the ice had like a skaiter glided:
 When tired of play, he flirted without sin
 With some of those fair creatures who have prided
 Themselves on innocent tantalisation,
 And hate all vice except its reputation.

XXVI.

But these are few, and in the end they make
 Some devilish escapade or stir, which shows
 That even the purest people may mistake
 Their way through virtue's primrose paths of snows;
 And then men stare, as if a new ass spake
 To Balaam, and from tongue to ear o'erflows
 Quick-silver small talk, ending (if you note it)
 With the kind world's amen—"Who would have thought it?"

XXVII.

The little Leila, with her orient eyes
 And taciturn Asiatic disposition
 (Which saw all western things with small surprise,
 To the surprise of people of condition,
 Who think that novelties are butterflies
 To be pursued as food for inanition),
 Her charming figure and romantic history,
 Became a kind of fashionable mystery.

XXVIII.

The women much divided—as is usual
 Amongst the sex in little things or great.
 Think not, fair creatures, that I mean to abuse you all—
 I have always liked you better than I state:
 Since I've grown moral, still I must accuse you all
 Of being apt to talk at a great rate;
 And now there was a general sensation
 Amongst you, about Leila's education.

XXIX.

In one point only were you settled—and
 You had reason; 't was that a young child of Grace,
 As beautiful as her own native land,
 And far away, the last bud of her race,
 Howe'er our friend Don Juan might command
 Himself for five, four, three, or two years' space,
 Would be much better taught beneath the eye
 Of peeresses whose follies had run dry.

XXX.

So first there was a generous emulation,
 And then there was a general competition
 To undertake the orphan's education.
 As Juan was a person of condition,
 It had been an affront on this occasion
 To talk of a subscription or petition;
 But sixteen dowagers, ten unwed she-sages,
 Whose tale belongs to "Hallam's Middle Ages,"

XXXI.

And one or two sad, separate wives, without
 A fruit to bloom upon their withering bough—
 Begg'd to bring up the little girl, and out,—
 For that 's the phrase that settles all things now,
 Meaning a virgin's first blush at a rout,
 And all her points as thorough-bred to show :
 And I assure you, that like virgin honey
 Tastes their first season (mostly if they 've money).

XXXII.

How all the needy honourable misters,
 Each out-at-elbow peer, or desperate dandy,
 The watchful mothers and the careful sisters
 (Who, by the by, when clever, are more handy
 At making matches, where "'t is gold that glisters,"
 Than their *he* relatives), like flies o'er candy,
 Buzz round "the Fortune" with their busy battery,
 To turn her head with waltzing and with flattery!

XXXIII.

Each aunt, each cousin, hath her speculation;
 Nay, married dames will now and then discover
 Such pure disinterestedness of passion,
 I've known them court an heiress for their lover.
 "Tantæne?" Such the virtues of high station,
 Even in the hopeful isle, whose outlet 's "Dover!"
 While the poor rich wretch, object of these cares,
 Has cause to wish her sire had had male heirs.

XXXIV.

Some are soon bagg'd, but some reject three dozen.
 'T is fine to see them scattering refusals
 And wild dismay o'er every angry cousin
 (Friends of the party), who begin accusals
 Such as—"Unless Miss (Blank) meant to have chosen
 Poor Frederick, why did she accord perusals
 To his billets? *Why* waltz with him? *Why*, I pray,
 Look *yes* last night, and yet say *no* to-day?

XXXV.

“ Why?—Why?—Besides, Fred really was *attach’d*;
 ’T was not her fortune—he has enough without :
 The time will come she ’ll wish that she had snatch’d
 So good an opportunity, no doubt :—
 But the old marchioness some plan had hatch’d,
 As I ’ll tell Aurea at to-morrow’s rout :
 And after all poor Frederick may do better—
 Pray, did you see her answer to his letter ? ”

XXXVI.

Smart uniforms and sparkling coronets
 Are spurn’d in turn, until her turn arrives,
 After much loss of time, and hearts, and bets
 Upon the sweepstakes for substantial wives ;
 And when at last the pretty creature gets
 Some gentleman who fights, or writes, or drives,
 It soothes the awkward squad of the rejected
 To find how very badly she selected.

XXXVII.

For sometimes they accept some long pursuer,
 Worn out with importunity ; or fall
 (But here perhaps the instances are fewer)
 To the lot of him who scarce pursued at all.
 A hazy widower turn’d of forty’s sure⁵
 (If ’t is not vain examples to recall)
 To draw a high prize : now, howe’er he got her, I
 See nought more strange in this than t’ other lottery.

XXXVIII.

I, for my part—(one “ modern instance ” more,
 “ True, ’t is a pity—pity ’t is, ’t is true ”)—
 Was chosen from out an amatory score,
 Albeit my years were less discreet than few ;
 But, though I also had reform’d before,
 Those became one who soon were to be two,
 I ’ll not gainsay the generous public’s voice,
 That the young lady made a monstrous choice.

XXXIX.

Oh, pardon me digression—or at least
 Peruse ! ’T is always with a moral end
 That I dissert, like grace before a feast :
 For like an aged aunt, or tiresome friend,
 A rigid guardian, or a zealous priest,
 My Muse by exhortation means to mend
 All people, at all times, and in most places,
 Which puts my Pegasus to these grave paces,

XL.

But now I 'm going to be immoral ; now
 I mean to show things really as they are,
 Not as they ought to be : for I avow,
 That till we see what 's what in fact, we 're far
 From much improvement with that virtuous plough
 Which skims the surface, leaving scarce a scar
 Upon the black loam long manured by vice,
 Only to keep its corn at the old price.

XLI.

But first of little Leila we 'll dispose ;
 For, like a day-dawn, she was young and pure,
 Or like the old comparison of snows,
 Which are more pure than pleasant to be sure,
 Like many people every body knows :
 Don Juan was delighted to secure
 A goodly guardian for his infant charge,
 Who might not profit much by being at large.

XLII.

Besides, he 'd found out that he was no tutor
 (I wish that others would find out the same) ;
 And rather wish'd in such things to stand neuter,
 For silly wards will bring their guardians blame :
 So when he saw each ancient dame a suitor
 To make his little wild Asiatic tame,
 Consulting the " Society for Vice
 Suppression," Lady Pinchbeck was his choice.

XLIII.

Olden she was—but had been very young ;
 Virtuous she was—and had been, I believe :
 Although the world has such an evil tongue
 That—but my chaster ear will not receive
 An echo of a syllable that 's wrong :
 In fact there 's nothing makes me so much grieve
 As that abominable tittle-tattle,
 Which is the cud eschew'd by human cattle.

XLIV.

Moreover I 've remark'd (and I was once
 A slight observer in a modest way),
 And so may every one except a dunce,
 That ladies in their youth a little gay,
 Besides their knowledge of the world, and sense
 Of the sad consequence of going astray,
 Are wiser in their warnings 'gainst the woe
 Which the mere passionless can never know.

XLV.

While the harsh prude indemnifies her virtue
 By railing at the unknown and envied passion,
 Seeking far less to save you than to hurt you,
 Or, what 's still worse, to put you out of fashion,—
 The kinder veteran with calm words will court you,
 Entreating you to pause before you dash on;
 Expounding and illustrating the riddle
 Of epic love's beginning, end, and middle.

XLVI.

Now, whether it be thus, or that they are stricter,
 As better knowing why they should be so,
 I think you 'll find from many a family picture,
 That daughters of such mothers as may know
 The world by experience rather than by lecture,
 Turn out much better for the Smithfield show
 Of vestals brought into the marriage mart,
 Than those bred up by prudes without a heart.

XLVII.

I said that Lady Pinchbeck had been talk'd about—
 As who has not, if female, young, and pretty?
 But now no more the ghost of scandal stalk'd about;
 She merely was deem'd amiable and witty,
 And several of her best bon-mots were hawk'd about;
 Then she was given to charity and pity,
 And pass'd (at least the latter years of life)
 For being a most exemplary wife.

XLVIII.

High in high circles, gentle in her own,
 She was the mild reprover of the young
 Whenever—which means every day—they 'd shown
 An awkward inclination to go wrong.
 The quantity of good she did 's unknown,
 Or at the least would lengthen out my song:—
 In brief, the little orphan of the east
 Had raised an interest in her, which increased.

XLIX.

Juan, too, was a sort of favourite with her,
 Because she thought him a good heart at bottom,
 A little spoil'd, but not so altogether;
 Which was a wonder, if you think who got him,
 And how he had been toss'd, he scarce knew whither:
 Though this might ruin others, it did *not* him,
 At least entirely—for he had seen too many
 Changes in youth to be surprised at any.

L.

And these vicissitudes tell best in youth ;
 For when they happen at a riper age,
 People are apt to blame the fates, forsooth,
 And wonder Providence is not more sage ;
 Adversity is the first path to truth :
 He who hath proved war, storm, or woman's rage,
 Whether his winters be eighteen or eighty,
 Hath won the experience which is deem'd so weighty.

LI.

How far it profits is another matter.—
 Our hero gladly saw his little charge
 Safe with a lady, whose last grown-up daughter
 Being long married, and thus set at large,
 Had left all the accomplishments she taught her
 To be transmitted, like the lord mayor's barge,
 To the next comer ; or—as it will tell
 More muse-like—like to Cytherea's shell.

LII.

I call such things transmission ; for there is
 A floating balance of accomplishment
 Which forms a pedigree from Miss to Miss,
 According as their minds or backs are bent.
 Some waltz ; some draw ; some fathom the abyss
 Of metaphysics ; others are content
 With music ; the most moderate shine as wits,
 While others have a genius turn'd for fits.

LIII.

But whether fits, or wits, or harpsichords,
 Theology, fine arts, or finer stays,
 May be the baits for gentlemen or lords
 With regular descent, in these our days,
 The last year to the new transfers its hoards ;
 New vestals claim men's eyes with the same praise
 Of "elegant," *et cætera*, in fresh batches—
 All matchless creatures, and yet bent on matches.

LIV.

But now I will begin my poem. 'T is
 Perhaps a little strange, if not quite new,
 That from the first of cantos up to this
 I've not begun what we have to go through :
 These first twelve books are merely flourishes,
 Preludios, trying just a string or two
 Upon my lyre, or making the pegs sure ;
 And when so, you shall have the overture.

LV.

My Muses do not care a pinch of rosin
 About what's call'd success, or not succeeding :
 Such thoughts are quite below the strain they've chosen ;
 'T is a " great moral lesson " they are reading.
 I thought, at setting off, about two dozen
 Cantos would do ; but at Apollo's pleading,
 If that my Pegasus should not be founder'd,
 I think to canter gently through a hundred.

LVI.

Don Juan saw that microcosm on stilts,
 Yclept the great world ; for it is the least,
 Although the highest : but as swords have hilts
 By which their power of mischief is increased,
 When man in battle or in quarrel tilts,
 Thus the low world, north, south, or west, or east,
 Must still obey the high—which is their handle,
 Their moon, their sun, their gas, their farthing candle.

LVII.

He had many friends who had many wives, and was
 Well look'd upon by both, to that extent
 Of friendship which you may accept or pass ;
 It does nor good nor harm, being merely meant
 To keep the wheels going of the higher class,
 And draw them nightly when a ticket's sent :
 And what with masquerades, and fêtes, and balls,
 For the first season such a life scarce palls.

LVIII.

A young unmarried man, with a good name
 And fortune, has an awkward part to play ;
 For good society is but a game,
 " The royal game of goose," as I may say
 Where every body has some separate aim,
 An end to answer, or a plan to lay—
 The single ladies wishing to be double,
 The married ones to save the virgins trouble.

LIX.

I don't mean this as general, but particular
 Examples may be found of such pursuits :
 Though several also keep their perpendicular,
 Like poplars, with good principles for roots ;
 Yet many have a method more *reticular*—
 " Fishers for men," like sirens with soft lutes ;
 For talk six times with the same single lady,
 And you may get the wedding-dresses ready.

LX.

Perhaps you'll have a letter from the mother,
 To say her daughter's feelings are trepann'd;
 Perhaps you'll have a visit from the brother,
 All strut, and stays, and whiskers, to demand
 What "your intentions are?"—One way or other
 It seems the virgin's heart expects your hand;
 And between pity for her case and yours,
 You'll add to matrimony's list of cures.

LXI.

I've known a dozen weddings made even *thus*,
 And some of them high names: I've also known
 Young men who—though they hated to discuss
 Pretensions which they never dream'd to have shown—
 Yet neither frighten'd by a female fuss,
 Nor by mustachios moved, were let alone,
 And lived, as did the broken-hearted fair,
 In happier plight than if they form'd a pair.

LXII.

There's also nightly, to the uninitiated,
 A peril—not indeed like love or marriage,
 But not the less for this to be depreciated:
 It is—I meant and mean not to disparage
 The show of virtue even in the vitiated—
 It adds an outward grace unto their carriage—
 But to denounce the amphibious sort of harlot,
 "Couleur de rose," who's neither white nor scarlet.

LXIII.

Such is your old coquette, who can't say "No,"
 And won't say "Yes," and keeps you on and off-ing,
 On a lee shore, till it begins to blow—
 Then sees your heart wreck'd, with an inward scoffing.
 This works a world of sentimental woe,
 And sends new Werters yearly to their coffin;
 But yet is merely innocent flirtation,
 Not quite adultery, but adulteration.

LXIV.

"Ye gods, I grow a talker!" Let us prate.
 The next of perils, though I place it *sternest*,
 Is when, without regard to "church or state,"
 A wife makes or takes love in upright earnest.
 Abroad, such things decide few women's fate—
 (Such, early traveller! is the truth thou learnest)—
 But in old England when a young bride errs,
 Poor thing! Eve's was a trifling case to hers;

LXV.

For 't is a low, newspaper, humdrum, lawsuit

Country, where a young couple of the same ages
Can't form a friendship but the world o'erawes it.

Then there 's the vulgar trick of those d—d damages;
A verdict—grievous foe to those who cause it!—

Forms a sad climax to romantic homages;
Besides those soothing speeches of the pleaders,
And evidences which regale all readers!

LXVI.

But they who blunder thus are raw beginners;

A little genial sprinkling of hypocrisy
Has saved the fame of thousand splendid sinners,

The loveliest oligarchs of our gynocracy;
You may see such at all the balls and dinners,

Among the proudest of our aristocracy,
So gentle, charming, charitable, chaste—
And all by having *tact* as well as taste.

LXVII.

Juan, who did not stand in the predicament

Of a mere novice, had one safeguard more;
For he was sick,—no, 't was not the word *sick* I meant—

But he had seen so much good love before,
That he was not in heart so very weak;—I meant

But thus much, and no sneer against the shore
Of white cliffs, white necks, blue eyes, bluer stockings,
Tithes, taxes, duns, and doors with double knockings.

LXVIII.

But coming young from lands and scenes romantic,
Where lives, not lawsuits, must be risk'd for passion,
And passion's self must have a spice of frantic,

Into a country where 't is half a fashion,
Seem'd to him half commercial, half pedantic,

Howe'er he might esteem this moral nation;
Besides (alas! his taste—forgive and pity!)
At first he did not think the women pretty.

LXIX.

I say at *first*—for he found out at *last*,
But by degrees, that they were fairer far
Than the more glowing dames whose lot is cast

Beneath the influence of the eastern star—
A further proof we should not judge in haste;

Yet inexperience could not be his bar
To taste:—the truth is, if men would confess,
That novelties *please* less than they *impress*.

LXX.

Though travell'd, I have never had the luck to
 Trace up those shuffling negroes, Nile or Niger,
 To that impracticable place, Tombuctoo,
 Where geography finds no one to oblige her
 With such a chart as may be safely stuck to—
 For Europe ploughs in Afric like “bos piger :”
 But if I *had been* at Tombuctoo, there
 No doubt I should be told that black is fair.

LXXI.

It is. I will not swear that black is white ;
 But I suspect in fact that white is black,
 And the whole matter rests upon eye-sight.
 Ask a blind man, the best judge. You 'll attack,
 Perhaps, this new position—but I 'm right ;
 Or if I 'm wrong, I 'll not be ta'en aback :
 He hath no morn nor night, but all is dark
 Within ; and what see'st thou? A dubious spark.

LXXII.

But I 'm relapsing into metaphysics,
 That labyrinth, whose clue is of the same
 Construction as your cures for hectic phthisics,
 Those bright moths fluttering round a dying flame :
 And this reflection brings me to plain physics,
 And to the beauties of a foreign dame,
 Compared with those of our pure pearls of price,
 Those Polar summers, *all* sun, and some ice.

LXXIII.

Or say they are like virtuous mermaids, whose
 Beginnings are fair faces, ends mere fishes ;—
 Not that there 's not a quantity of those
 Who have a due respect for their own wishes.
 Like Russians rushing from hot baths to snows ?
 Are they, at bottom virtuous e'en when vicious :
 They warm into a scrape, but keep of course,
 As a reserve, a plunge into remorse.

LXXIV.

But this has nought to do with their outsides.
 I said that Juan did not think them pretty
 At the first blush ; for a fair Briton hides
 Half her attractions—probably from pity—
 And rather calmly into the heart glides,
 Than storms it as a foe would take a city ;
 But once there (if you doubt this, prithee try)
 She keeps it for you like a true ally.

LXXV.

She cannot step as does an Arab barb,
 Or Andalusian girl from mass returning,
 Nor wear as gracefully as Gauls her garb,
 Nor in her eye Ausonia's glance is burning;
 Her voice, though sweet, is not so fit to warb-
 le those bravuras (which I still am learning
 To like, though I have been seven years in Italy,
 And have, or had, an ear that served me prettily);—

LXXVI.

She cannot do these things, nor one or two
 Others, in that off-hand and dashing style
 Which takes so much—to give the devil his due;
 Nor is she quite so ready with her smile,
 Nor settles all things in one interview
 (A thing approved as saving time and toil):—
 But though the soil may give you time and trouble,
 Well cultivated, it will render double.

LXXVII.

And if in fact she takes to a “grande passion,”
 It is a very serious thing indeed;
 Nine times in ten 't is but caprice or fashion,
 Coquetry, or a wish to take the lead,
 The pride of a mere child with a new sash on,
 Or wish to make a rival's bosom bleed;
 But the tenth instance will be a tornado,
 For there 's no saying what they will or may do.

LXXVIII.

The reason 's obvious: if there 's an *eclat*,
 They lose their caste at once, as do the Parias;
 And when the delicacies of the law
 Have fill'd their papers with their comments various,
 Society, that china without flaw,
 (The hypocrite!) will banish them like Marius,
 To sit amidst the ruins of their guilt:
 For Fame 's a Carthage not so soon rebuilt.

LXXIX.

Perhaps this is as it should be;—it is
 A comment on the Gospel's “Sin no more,
 And be thy sins forgiven:”—but upon this
 I leave the saints to settle their own score.
 Abroad, though doubtless they do much amiss,
 An erring weman finds an opener door
 For her return to virtue—as they call
 That lady who should be at home to all.

LXXX.

For me, I leave the matter where I find it,
 Knowing that such uneasy virtue leads
 People some ten times less in fact to mind it,
 And care but for discoveries and not deeds.
 And as for chastity, you 'll never bind it
 By all the laws the strictest lawyer pleads,
 But aggravate the crime you have not prevented,
 By rendering desperate those who 'd else repented.

LXXXI.

But Juan was no casuist, nor had ponder'd
 Upon the moral lessons of mankind:
 Besides, he had not seen, of several hundred,
 A lady altogether to his mind.
 A little "blasé"—'t is not to be wonder'd
 At, that his heart had got a tougher rind:
 And though not vainer from his past success,
 No doubt his sensibilities were less.

LXXXII.

He also had been busy seeing sights—
 The parliament and all the other houses;
 Had sate beneath the galleries at nights,
 To hear debates whose thunder *roused* (not *rouses*)
 The world to gaze upon those northern lights⁸
 Which flash'd as far as where the musk-bull browses:
 He had also stood at times behind the throne—
 But Grey was not arrived, and Chatham gone.

LXXXIII.

He saw, however, at the closing session,
 That noble sight, when *really* free the nation,
 A king in constitutional possession
 Of such a throne as is the proudest station,
 Though despots know it not—till the progression
 Of freedom shall complete their education.
 'T is not mere splendour makes the show august
 To eye or heart—it is the people's trust.

LXXXIV.

There too he saw (whate'er he may be now)
 A prince, the prince of princes, at the time,⁹
 With fascination in his very bow,
 And full of promise, as the spring of prime.
 Though royalty was written on his brow,
 He had *then* the grace too, rare in every clime,
 Of being, without alloy of fop or beau,
 A finish'd gentleman from top to toe.

LXXXV.

And Juan was received, as hath been said,
 Into the best society: and there
 Occurr'd what often happens, I 'm afraid,
 However disciplined and debonnaire:
 The talent and good humour he display'd,
 Besides the mark'd distinction of his air,
 Exposed him, as was natural, to temptation,
 Even though himself avoided the occasion.

LXXXVI.

But what, and where, with whom, and when, and why,
 Is not to be put hastily together;
 And as my object is morality
 (Whatever people say), I don't know whether
 I'll leave a single reader's eyelid dry,
 But harrow up his feelings till they wither,
 And hew out a huge monument of pathos,
 As Philip's son proposed to do with Athos.¹⁰

LXXXVII.

Here the twelfth canto of our introduction
 Ends. When the body of the book's begun,
 You'll find it of a different construction
 From what some people say 't will be when done:
 The plan at present's simply in concoction.
 I can't oblige you, reader! to read on;
 That's your affair, not mine: a real spirit
 Should neither court neglect, nor dread to bear it.

LXXXVIII.

And if my thunderbolt not always rattles,
 Remember, reader! you have had before
 The worst of tempests and the best of battles
 That e'er were brew'd from elements or gore,
 Besides the most sublime of—Heaven knows what else:
 An usurer could scarce expect much more—
 But my best canto, save one on astronomy,
 Will turn upon "political economy."

LXXXIX.

That is your present theme for popularity:
 Now that the public hedge hath scarce a stake,
 It grows an act of patriotic charity,
 To show the people the best way to break.
 My plan (but I, if but for singularity,
 Reserve it) will be very sure to take.
 Meantime read all the national debt-sinkers,
 And tell me what you think of your great thinkers.

NOTES TO CANTO XII.

Note 1. Stanza xiii.

"Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above,
And love is heaven, and heaven is love."—*Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

Note 2. Stanza xiv.

"The way to reduce our poor-rates," says Malthus, "is to persuade the lower orders to continence; to discourage them, as much as possible, from marrying; to preach wedding sermons to them, if they will marry, upon the immorality of breeding,—that being a luxury reserved only for those who can afford it; and if they will persist in so improper and immoral a practice, after so solemn and well timed a warning, to leave them to the punishment of severe want, and rigidly deny all parish assistance."

Note 3. Stanza xvi.

See *Edinburgh Review*, 1822.—"The peculiarity by which he (W. Scott) stands most broadly and proudly distinguished from Lord Byron is, that beginning, as he frequently does, with some ludicrous or satirical theme, he never fails to raise out of it some feelings of a generous and gentle kind, and to end by exciting our tender pity, or deep respect, for those very individuals or classes of persons who seemed at first to be brought on the stage for our mere sport and amusement."—JEFFREY.

Note 4. Stanza xix.

See MITFORD'S *Greece*. "*Græcia Verax*." His great pleasure consists in praising tyrants, abusing Plutarch, spelling oddly, and writing quaintly; and, what is strange, after all, *his* is the best modern history of Greece in any language, and he is perhaps the best of all modern historians whatsoever. Having named his sins, it is but fair to state his virtues—learning, labour, research, wrath, and partiality. I call the latter virtues in a writer, because they make him write in earnest.

Note 5. Stanza xxxvii.

This line may puzzle the commentators more than the present generation.

Note 6. Stanza lv.

"The same feeling which makes the people of France wish to keep the pictures and statues of other nations, must naturally make other nations wish, now that victory is on their side, to return those articles to the lawful owners. According to my feelings, it would not only be unjust in the Allied Sovereigns to gratify the French people, but the sacrifice they would make would be impolitic, as it would deprive them of the opportunity of giving the French nation *a great moral lesson*." —WELLINGTON, *Paris*, 1815.

Note 7. Stanza lxxiii.

The Russians, as is well known, run out from their hot baths to plunge into the Neva: a pleasant practical antithesis, which it seems does them no harm.

Note 8. Stanza lxxxii.

For a description and print of this inhabitant of the polar region and native country of the auroræ boreales, see PARRY'S *Voyage in search of a North-West Passage*.

Note 9. Stanza lxxxiv.

See Lord Byron's letter to Sir Walter Scott, July, 1812, in MOORE'S *Notices*

Note 10. Stanza lxxxvi.

A sculptor projected to hew Mount Athos into a statue of Alexander, with a city in one hand, and, I believe, a river in his pocket, with various other similar devices. But Alexander's cone, and Athos remains, I trust, ere long, to look over a nation of freemen.

CANTO XIII.

I.

I now mean to be serious ;—it is time,
 Since laughter now-a-days is deem'd too serious.
 A jest at vice by virtue 's call'd a crime,
 And critically held as deleterious :
 Besides, the sad 's a source of the sublime,
 Although when long a little apt to weary us ;
 And therefore shall my lay soar high and solemn,
 As an old temple dwindled to a column.

II.

The Lady Adeline Amundeville
 ('T is an old Norman name, and to be found
 In pedigrees by those who wander still
 Along the last fields of that gothic ground)
 Was high-born, wealthy by her father's will,
 And beauteous, even where beauties most abound,
 In Britain—which of course true patriots find
 The goodliest soil of body and of mind.

III.

I 'll not gainsay them ; it is not my cue ;
 I leave them to their taste, no doubt the best :
 An eye 's an eye, and whether black or blue,
 Is no great matter, so 't is in request :
 'T is nonsense to dispute about a hue—
 The kindest may be taken as a test.
 The fair sex should be always fair ; and no man,
 Till thirty, should perceive there 's a plain woman.

IV.

And after that serene and somewhat dull
 Epoch, that awkward corner turn'd for days
 More quiet, when our moon 's no more at full,
 We may presume to criticise or praise ;
 Because indifference begins to lull
 Our passions, and we walk in wisdom's ways ;
 Also because the figure and the face
 Hint, that 't is time to give the younger place.

V.

I know that some would fain postpone this era,
 Reluctant as all placemen to resign
 Their post; but theirs is merely a chimera,
 For they have pass'd life's equinoctial line:
 But then they have their claret and madeira,
 To irrigate the dryness of decline;
 And county meetings and the parliament,
 And debt, and what not, for their solace sent.

VI.

And is there not religion and reform,
 Peace, war, the taxes, and what's call'd the "nation?"
 The struggle to be pilots in a storm?
 The landed and the monied speculation?
 The joys of mutual hate to keep them warm,
 Instead of love, that mere hallucination?
 Now hatred is by far the longest pleasure;
 Men love in haste, but they detest at leisure.

VII.

Rough Johnson, the great moralist, profess'd,
 Right honestly, "he liked an honest hater"—
 The only truth that yet has been confess'd
 Within these latest thousand years or later.
 Perhaps the fine old fellow spoke in jest;—
 For my part, I am but a mere spectator,
 And gaze where'er the palace or the hovel is,
 Much in the mode of Goëthe's Mephistopheles,

VIII.

But neither love nor hate in much excess;
 Though 't was not once so. If I sneer sometimes,
 It is because I cannot well do less,
 And now and then it also suits my rhymes.
 I should be very willing to redress
 Men's wrongs, and rather check than punish crimes,
 Had not Cervantes, in that too true tale
 Of Quixote, shown how all such efforts fail.

IX.

Of all tales 't is the saddest—and more sad,
 Because it makes us smile; his hero's right,
 And still pursues the right;—to curb the bad,
 His only object, and 'gainst odds to fight,
 His guerdon: 't is his virtue makes him mad!
 But his adventures form a sorry sight;
 A sorrier still is the great moral taught
 By that real epic unto all who've thought.

X.

Redressing injury, revenging wrong,
 To aid the damsel and destroy the caitiff;
 Opposing singly the united strong,
 From foreign yoke to free the helpless native;
 Alas! must noblest views, like an old song,
 Be for mere fancy's sport a theme creative?
 A jest, a riddle, fame through thick and thin sought?
 And Socrates himself but wisdom's Quixote?

XI.

Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away;
 A single laugh demolish'd the right arm
 Of his own country;—seldom since that day
 Has Spain had heroes. While romance could charm,
 The world gave ground before her bright array;
 And therefore have his volumes done such harm,
 That all their glory, as a composition,
 Was dearly purchased by his land's perdition.

XII.

I 'm “at my old lunes”²—digression, and forget
 The Lady Adeline Amundeville;
 The fair most fatal Juan ever met,
 Although she was not evil nor meant ill;
 But destiny and passion spread the net
 (Fate is a good excuse for our own will),
 And caught them; what do they *not* catch, methinks?
 But I 'm not *Œdipus*, and life 's a sphinx.

XIII.

I tell the tale as it is told, nor dare
 To venture a solution: “*Davus sum!*”³
 And now I will proceed upon the pair.
 Sweet Adeline, amidst the gay world's hum,
 Was the queen-bee, the glass of all that 's fair;
 Whose charms made all men speak, and women dumb.
 The last 's a miracle, and such was reckon'd,
 And since that time there has not been a second.

XIV.

Chaste was she to detraction's desperation,
 And wedded unto one she had loved well—
 A man known in the councils of the nation,
 Cool, and quite English, imperturbable,
 Though apt to act with fire upon occasion,
 Proud of himself and her; the world could tell
 Nought against either, and both seem'd secure—
 She in her virtue, he in his *hauteur*.

XV.

It chanced some diplomatical relations,
 Arising out of business, often brought
 Himself and Juan in their mutual stations
 Into close contact. Though reserved, nor caught
 By specious seeming, Juan's youth, and patience,
 And talent, on his haughty spirit wrought,
 And form'd a basis of esteem, which ends
 In making men what courtesy calls friends.

XVI.

And thus Lord Henry, who was cautious as
 Reserve and pride could make him, and full slow
 In judging men—when once his judgment was
 Determined, right or wrong, on friend or foe,
 Had all the pertinacity pride has,
 Which knows no ebb to its imperious flow,
 And loves or hates, disdaining to be guided,
 Because its own good pleasure hath decided.

XVII.

His friendships, therefore, and no less aversions,
 Though oft well founded, which confirm'd but more
 His prepossessions, like the laws of Persians
 And Medes, would ne'er revoke what went before.
 His feelings had not those strange fits, like tertians,
 Of common likings, which make some deplore
 What they should laugh at—the mere ague still
 Of men's regard, the fever or the chill.

XVIII.

“ 'T is not in mortals to command success ;
 But *do you more*, Sempronius—*don't* deserve it,”⁴
 And take my word, you won't have any less :
 Be wary, watch the time, and always serve it ;
 Give gently way, where there 's too great a press ;
 And for your conscience, only learn to nerve it,—
 For, like a racer or a boxer training,
 'T will make, if proved, vast efforts without paining.

XIX.

Lord Henry also liked to be superior,
 As most men do, the little or the great ;
 The very lowest find out an inferior,
 At least they think so, to exert their state
 Upon : for there are very few things wearier
 Than solitary pride's oppressive weight,
 Which mortals generously would divide,
 By bidding others carry while they ride.

XX.

In birth, in rank, in fortune likewise equal,
 O'er Juan he could no distinction claim;
 In years he had the advantage of time's sequel;
 And, as he thought, in country much the same—
 Because bold Britons have a tongue and free quill,
 At which all modern nations vainly aim;
 And the Lord Henry was a great debater,
 So that few members kept the House up later.

XXI.

These were advantages : and then he thought—
 It was his foible, but by no means sinister—
 That few or none more than himself had caught
 Court mysteries, having been himself a minister :
 He liked to teach that which he had been taught,
 And greatly shone whenever there had been a stir ;
 And reconciled all qualities which grace man,
 Always a patriot, and sometimes a placeman.

XXII.

He liked the gentle Spaniard for his gravity ;
 He almost honour'd him for his docility,
 Because, though young, he acquiesced with suavity,
 Or contradicted but with proud humility.
 He knew the world, and would not see depravity
 In faults which sometimes show the soil's fertility,
 If that the weeds o'erlive not the first crop,—
 For then they are very difficult to stop.

XXIII.

And then he talk'd with him about Madrid,
 Constantinople, and such distant places ;
 Where people always did as they were bid,
 Or did what they should not with foreign graces.
 Of coursers also spake they : Henry rid
 Well, like most Englishmen, and loved the races ;
 And Juan, like a true-born Andalusian,
 Could back a horse, as despots ride a Russian.

XXIV.

And thus acquaintance grew, at noble routs,
 And diplomatic dinners, or at other—
 For Juan stood well both with ins and outs,
 As in freemasonry a higher brother.
 Upon his talent Henry had no doubts,
 His manner show'd him sprung from a high mother ;
 And all men like to show their hospitality
 To him whose breeding marches with his quality.

XXV.

At Blank-Blank Square ;—for we will break no squares
 By naming streets : since men are so censorious,
 And apt to sow an author's wheat with tares,
 Reaping allusions private and inglorious,
 Where none were dreamt of, unto love's affairs
 Which were, or are, or are to be notorious,
 That therefore do I previously declare,
 Lord Henry's mansion was in Blank-Blank Square.

XXVI.

Also there bin^d another pious reason
 For making squares and streets anonymous ;
 Which is, that there is scarce a single season
 Which doth not shake some very splendid house
 With some slight heart-quake of domestic treason—
 A topic scandal doth delight to rouse :
 Such I might stumble over unawares,
 Unless I knew the very chastest squares.

XXVII.

'T is true, I might have chosen Piccadilly,
 A place where peccadillos are unknown ;
 But I have motives, whether wise or silly,
 For letting that pure sanctuary alone.
 Therefore I name not square, street, place, until I
 Find one where nothing naughty can be shown,
 A vestal shrine of innocence of heart :
 Such are—but I have lost the London chart.

XXVIII.

At Henry's mansion then in Blank-Blank Square,
 Was Juan a *recherché*, welcome guest,
 As many other noble scions were ;
 And some who had but talent for their crest ;
 Or wealth, which is a passport everywhere ;
 Or even mere fashion, which indeed 's the best
 Recommendation, and to be well drest
 Will very often supersede the rest.

XXIX.

And since "there 's safety in a multitude
 Of counsellors," as Solomon has said,
 Or some one for him, in some sage grave mood :—
 Indeed we see the daily proof display'd
 In senates, at the bar, in wordy feud,
 Where'er collective wisdom can parade,
 Which is the only cause that we can guess
 Of Britain's present wealth and happiness ;—

XXX.

But as "there's safety" grafted in the number
 "Of counsellors" for men,—thus for the sex
 A large acquaintance lets not virtue slumber;
 Or, should it shake, the choice will more perplex—
 Variety itself will more encumber.
 'Midst many rocks we guard more against wrecks;
 And thus with women: howsoe'er it shock some's
 Self-love, there's safety in a crowd of coxcombs.

XXXI.

But Adeline had not the least occasion
 For such a shield, which leaves but little merit
 To virtue proper, or good education.
 Her chief resource was in her own high spirit,
 Which judged mankind at their due estimation;
 And for coquetry, she disdain'd to wear it:
 Secure of admiration, its impression
 Was faint, as of an every-day possession.

XXXII.

To all she was polite without parade;
 To some she show'd attention of that kind
 Which flatters, but is flattery convey'd
 In such a sort as cannot leave behind
 A trace unworthy either wife or maid;
 A gentle genial courtesy of mind,
 To those who were, or pass'd for, meritorious,
 Just to console sad glory for being glorious;

XXXIII.

Which is in all respects, save now and then,
 A dull and desolate appendage. Gaze
 Upon the shades of those distinguish'd men,
 Who were or are the puppet-shows of praise,
 The praise of persecution. Gaze again
 On the most favour'd; and, amidst the blaze
 Of sunset halos o'er the laurel-brow'd,
 What can ye recognize?—A gilded cloud.

XXXIV.

There also was of course in Adeline
 That calm patrician polish in the address,
 Which ne'er can pass the equinoctial line
 Of any thing which Nature would express:
 Just as a mandarin finds nothing fine,—
 At least his manner suffers not to guess
 That any thing he views can greatly please—
 Perhaps we have borrow'd this from the Chinese,

XXXV.

Perhaps from Horace ; his "*Nil admirari*"
 Was what he call'd the "Art of Happiness ;"
 An art on which the artists greatly vary,
 And have not yet attain'd to much success.
 However, 't is expedient to be wary :
 Indifference certes don't produce distress ;
 And rash enthusiasm in good society
 Were nothing but a moral inebriety.

XXXVI.

But Adeline was not indifferent : for,
 (Now for a common-place !) beneath the snow,
 As a volcano holds the lava more
 Within—*et cætera*. Shall I go on?—No !
 I hate to hunt down a tired metaphor :
 So let the often-used volcano go.
 Poor thing ! how frequently, by me and others,
 It hath been stirr'd up till its smoke quite smothers !

XXXVII.

I 'll have another figure in a trice :
 What say you to a bottle of Champagne ?
 Frozen into a very vinous ice,
 Which leaves few drops of that immortal rain,
 Yet in the very centre, past all price,
 About a liquid glassful will remain ;
 And this is stronger than the strongest grape
 Could e'er express in its expanded shape :

XXXVIII

'T is the whole spirit brought to a quintessence ;
 And thus the chilliest aspects may concentrate
 A hidden nectar under a cold presence,
 And such are many—though I only meant her
 From whom I now deduce these moral lessons,
 On which the Muse has always sought to enter :
 And your cold people are beyond all price,
 When once you 've broken their confounded ice.

XXXIX.

But after all they are a north-west passage
 Unto the glowing India of the soul ;
 And as the good ships sent upon that message
 Have not exactly ascertain'd the Pole
 (Though Parry's efforts look a lucky presage),
 Thus gentlemen may run upon a shoal ;
 For, if the Pole 's not open, but all frost
 (A chance still), 't is a voyage or vessel lost.

XL.

And young beginners may as well commence
 With quiet cruising o'er the ocean woman;
 While those who 're not beginners, should have sense
 Enough to make for port, ere Time shall summon
 With his gray signal-flag; and the past tense,
 The dreary "*fuimus*" of all things human,
 Must be declined, whilst life's thin thread's spun out
 Between the gaping heir and gnawing gout.

XLI.

But Heaven must be diverted: its diversion
 Is sometimes truculent—but never mind:
 The world upon the whole is worth the assertion
 (If but for comfort) that all things are kind:
 And that same devilish doctrine of the Persian,⁶
 Of the two principles, but leaves behind
 As many doubts as any other doctrine
 Has ever puzzled Faith withal, or yoked her in.

XLII.

The English winter—ending in July,
 To recommence in August—now was done.
 'T is the postilion's paradise: wheels fly;
 On roads east, south, north, west, there is a run.
 But for post-horses who finds sympathy?
 Man's pity 's for himself, or for his son,
 Always premising that said son at college
 Has not contracted much more debt than knowledge.

XLIII.

The London winter 's ended in July—
 Sometimes a little later. I don't err
 In this: whatever other blunders lie
 Upon my shoulders, here I must aver
 My Muse a glass of weatherology;
 For Parliament is our barometer:
 Let radicals its other acts attack,
 Its sessions form our only almanack.

XLIV.

When its quicksilver 's down at zero,—lo!
 Coach, chariot, luggage, baggage, equipage!
 Wheels whirl from Carlton-palace to Soho,
 And happiest they who horses can engage;
 The turnpikes glow with dust, and Rotten-row
 Sleeps from the chivalry of this bright age;
 And tradesmen, with long bills and longer faces,
 Sigh, as the post-boys fasten on the traces.

XLV.

They and their bills, "Arcadians both,"⁷ are left
 To the Greek kalends of another session.
 Alas! to them of ready cash bereft,
 What hope remains? Of *hope* the full possession,
 Or generous draft, conceded as a gift,
 At a long date—till they can get a fresh one,—
 Hawk'd about at a discount, small or large;—
 Also the solace of an overcharge.

XLVI.

But these are trifles. Downward flies my lord,
 Nodding beside my lady in his carriage.
 Away! away! "Fresh horses!" are the word,
 And changed as quickly as hearts after marriage.
 The obsequious landlord hath the change restored;
 The post-boys have no reason to disparage
 Their fee; but ere the water'd wheels may hiss hence,
 The ostler pleads too for a reminiscence.

XLVII.

'T is granted; and the valet mounts the dickey—
 That gentleman of lords and gentlemen;
 Also my lady's gentlewoman, tricky,
 Trick'd out, but modest more than poet's pen
 Can paint,—"*Così viaggino i ricchi!*"⁸
 (Excuse a foreign slipslop now and then,
 If but to show I've travell'd; and what's travel,
 Unless it teaches one to quote and cavil?)

XLVIII.

The London winter and the country summer
 Were well nigh over. 'T is perhaps a pity,
 When Nature wears the gown that doth become her,
 To lose those best months in a sweaty city,
 And wait until the nightingale grows dumber,
 Listening debates not very wise or witty,
 Ere patriots their true *country* can remember;—
 But there's no shooting (save grouse) till September.

XLIX.

I've done with my tirade. The world was gone;
 The twice two thousand for whom earth was made,
 Were vanish'd to be what they call alone,—
 That is, with thirty servants for parade,
 As many guests or more; before whom groan
 As many covers, duly, daily laid.
 Let none accuse old England's hospitality—
 Its quantity is but condensed to quality.

L.

Lord Henry and the Lady Adeline
 Departed, like the rest of their compeers,
 The peerage, to a mansion very fine ;
 The gothic Babel of a thousand years.
 None than themselves could boast a longer line,
 Where time through heroes and through beauties steers ;
 And oaks, as olden as their pedigree,
 Told of their sires, a tomb in every tree.

LI.

A paragraph in every paper told
 Of their departure : such is modern fame :
 'T is pity that it takes no further hold
 Than an advertisement, or much the same ;
 When, ere the ink be dry, the sound grows cold.
 The Morning Post was foremost to proclaim—
 “ Departure, for his country-seat, to-day,
 Lord H. Amundeville and Lady A.

LII.

“ We understand the splendid host intends
 To entertain, this autumn, a select
 And numerous party of his noble friends ;
 'Midst whom we 've heard from sources quite correct,
 The Duke of D—— the shooting season spends,
 With many more by rank and fashion deck'd ;
 Also a foreigner of high condition,
 The envoy of the secret Russian mission.”

LIII.

And thus we see—who doubts the Morning Post ?
 (Whose articles are like the “ thirty-nine,”
 Which those most swear to who believe them most)—
 Our gay Russ-Spaniard was ordain'd to shine,
 Deck'd by the rays reflected from his host,
 With those who, Pope says, “ greatly daring dine.”
 'T is odd, but true,—last war, the news abounded
 More with these dinners than the kill'd or wounded.

LIV.

As thus : “ On Thursday there was a grand dinner ;
 Present, Lords A. B. C.”—Earls, dukes, by name
 Announced with no less pomp than victory's winner :
 Then underneath, and in the very same
 Column : “ Date, Falmouth, There has lately been here
 The slap-dash regiment, so well known to fame ;
 Whose loss in the late action we regret :
 The vacancies are fill'd up—see Gazette.”

LV.

To Norman Abbey whirl'd the noble pair,
 An old, old monastery once, and now
 Still older mansion, of a rich and rare
 Mix'd gothic, such as artists all allow
 Few specimens yet left us can compare
 Withal : it lies perhaps a little low,
 Because the monks preferr'd a hill behind,
 To shelter their devotion from the wind.

LVI.

It stood embosom'd in a happy valley,
 Crown'd by high woodlands, where the druid oak
 Stood like Caractacus in act to rally
 His host, with broad arms 'gainst the thunder-stroke ;
 And from beneath his boughs were seen to sally
 The dappled foresters—as day awoke,
 The branching stag swept down with all his herd,
 To quaff a brook which murmur'd like a bird.

LVII.

Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,
 Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
 By a river, which its soften'd way did take
 In currents through the calmer water spread
 Around : the wild fowl nestled in the brake
 And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed :
 The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood
 With their green faces fix'd upon the flood.

LVIII.

Its outlet dash'd into a deep cascade,
 Sparkling with foam until again subsiding,
 Its shriller echoes—like an infant made
 Quiet—sank into softer ripples, gliding
 Into a rivulet ; and, thus allay'd,
 Pursued its course, now gleaming, and now hiding
 Its windings through the woods ; now clear, now blue,
 According as the skies their shadows threw.

LIX.

A glorious remnant of the gothic pile
 (While yet the church was Rome's) stood half apart
 In a grand arch, which once screen'd many an aisle.
 These last had disappear'd—a loss to art :
 The first yet frown'd superbly o'er the soil,
 And kindled feelings in the roughest heart,
 Which mourn'd the power of time's or tempest's march,
 In gazing on that venerable arch.

LX.

Within a niche, nigh to its pinnacle,
 Twelve saints had once stood sanctified in stone;
 But these had fallen, not when the friars fell,
 But in the war which struck Charles from his throne,
 When each house was a fortalice—as tell
 The annals of full many a line undone,—
 The gallant cavaliers, who fought in vain
 For those who knew not to resign or reign.

LXI.

But in a higher niche, alone, but crown'd,
 The Virgin Mother of the God-born child,¹⁰
 With her son in her bless'd arms, look'd around,
 Spared by some chance when all beside was spoil'd;
 She made the earth below seem holy ground.
 This may be superstition, weak or wild,
 But even the faintest relics of a shrine
 Of any worship wake some thoughts divine.

LXII.

A mighty window, hollow in the centre,
 Shorn of its glass of thousand colourings,
 Through which the deepen'd glories once could enter,
 Streaming from off the sun like seraph's wings,
 Now yawns all desolate: now loud, now fainter,
 The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft sings
 The owl his anthem, where the silenced quire
 Lie with their hallelujahs quench'd like fire.

LXIII.

But in the noontide of the moon, and when
 The wind is winged from one point of heaven,
 There moans a strange unearthly sound, which then
 Is musical—a dying accent driven
 Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again.
 Some deem it but the distant echo given
 Back to the night-wind by the waterfall,
 And harmonized by the old choral wall:

LXIV.

Others, that some original shape or form,
 Shaped by decay perchance, hath given the power
 (Though less than that of Memnon's statue, warm
 In Egypt's rays, to harp at a fix'd hour)
 To this gray ruin, with a voice to charm.
 Sad, but serene, it sweeps o'er tree or tower:
 The cause I know not, nor can solve; but such
 The fact:—I've heard it,—once perhaps too much."

LXV.

Amidst the court a gothic fountain play'd,¹²
 Symmetrical, but deck'd with carvings quaint—
 Strange faces, like to men in masquerade,
 And here perhaps a monster, there a saint:
 The spring gush'd through grim mouths, of granite made,
 And sparkled into basins, where it spent
 Its little torrent in a thousand bubbles,
 Like man's vain glory, and his vainer troubles.

LXVI.

The mansion's self was vast and venerable,
 With more of the monastic than has been
 Elsewhere preserved: the cloisters still were stable,
 The cells too and refectory, I ween:
 An exquisite small chapel had been able,
 Still unimpair'd, to decorate the scene;¹³
 The rest has been reform'd, replaced, or sunk,
 And spoke more of the baron than the monk.

LXVII.

Huge halls, long galleries, spacious chambers, join'd
 By no quite lawful marriage of the arts,
 Might shock a connoisseur: but, when combined,
 Form'd a whole which, irregular in parts,
 Yet left a grand impression on the mind,
 At least of those whose eyes are in their hearts.
 We gaze upon a giant for his stature,
 Nor judge at first if all be true to nature.

LXVIII.

Steel barons, molten the next generation
 To silken rows of gay and garter'd earls,
 Glanced from the walls in goodly preservation;
 And Lady Marys, blooming into girls,
 With fair long locks, had also kept their station;
 And countesses mature in robes and pearls:
 Also some beauties of Sir Peter Lely,
 Whose drapery hints we may admire them freely:

LXIX.

Judges, in very formidable ermine,
 Were there, with brows that did not much invite
 The accused to think their lordships would determine
 His cause by leaning much from might to right:
 Bishops who had not left a single sermon:
 Attorneys-general, awful to the sight,
 As hinting more (unless our judgments warp us)
 Of the "Star Chamber" than of "Habeas corpus."

LXX.

Generals, some all in armour, of the old
 And iron time, ere lead had ta'en the lead;
 Others in wigs of Marlborough's martial fold,
 Huger than twelve of our degenerate breed
 Lordlings, with staves of white or keys of gold :
 Nimrods, whose canvas scarce contain'd the steed ;
 And here and there some stern high patriot stood,
 Who could not get the place for which he sued.

LXXI.

But, ever and anon, to soothe your vision,
 Fatigued with these hereditary glories,
 There rose a Carlo Dolce or a Titian,
 Or wilder group of savage Salvatore's :¹⁴
 Here danced Albano's boys, and here the sea shone
 In Vernet's ocean lights ; and there the stories
 Of martyrs awed, as Spagnoletto tainted
 His brush with all the blood of all the sainted.

LXXII.

Here sweetly spread a landscape of Lorraine ;
 There Rembrandt made his darkness equal light,
 Or gloomy Caravaggio's gloomier stain
 Bronzed o'er some lean and stoic anchorite :—
 But lo ! a Teniers woos, and not in vain,
 Your eyes to revel in a livelier sight :
 His bell-mouth'd goblet makes me feel quite Danish,¹⁵
 Or Dutch with thirst—What ho ! a flask of Rhenish.

LXXIII.

Oh, reader ! If that thou canst read,—and know
 'T is not enough to spell, or even to read,
 To constitute a reader ; there must go
 Virtues of which both you and I have need.
 Firstly, begin with the beginning (though
 That clause is hard), and secondly, proceed ;
 Thirdly, commence not with the end—or, sinning
 In this sort, end at least with the beginning.

LXXIV.

But, reader, thou hast patient been of late,
 While I, without remorse of rhyme, or fear,
 Have built and laid out ground at such a rate,
 Dan Phœbus takes me for an auctioneer.
 That poets were so from their earliest date,
 By Homer's " catalogue of ships " is clear ;
 But a mere modern must be moderate—
 I spare you, then, the furniture and plate.

LXXV.

The mellow autumn came, and with it came
 The promised party, to enjoy its sweets.
 The corn is cut, the manor full of game;
 The pointer ranges, and the sportsman beats
 In russet jacket:—lynx-like is his aim,
 Full grows his bag, and wonderful his feats.
 Ah, nutbrown partridges! ah, brilliant pheasants!
 And ah, ye poachers!—'T is no sport for peasants.

LXXVI.

An English autumn, though it hath no vines,
 Blushing with Bacchant coronals along
 The paths, o'er which the fair festoon entwines
 The red grape in the sunny lands of song,
 Hath yet a purchased choice of choicest wines;
 The claret light, and the madeira strong.
 If Britain mourn her bleakness, we can tell her,
 The very best of vineyards is the cellar.

LXXVII.

Then, if she hath not that serene decline
 Which makes the southern autumn's day appear
 As if 't would to a second spring resign
 The season, rather than to winter drear,—
 Of in-door comforts still she hath a mine,—
 The sea-coal fires, the earliest of the year;
 Without doors too she may complete in mellow,
 As what is lost in green is gain'd in yellow.

LXXVIII.

And for the effeminate *villeggiatura*—
 Rife with more horns than hounds—she hath the chase
 So animated that it might allure a
 Saint from his beads to join the jocund race;
 Even Nimrod's self might leave the plains of Dura,¹⁶
 And wear the Melton jacket for a space:¹⁷
 If she hath no wild boars, she hath a tame
 Preserve of bores, who ought to be made game.

LXXIX.

The noble guests, assembled at the abbey,
 Consisted of—we give the sex the *pas*—
 The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke; the Countess Crabby;
 The Ladies Scilly, Busey; Miss Eclat,
 Miss Bombazeen, Miss Mackstay, Miss O'Tabby
 And Mrs. Rabbi, the rich banker's squaw;
 Also the Honourable Mrs. Sleep,
 Who look'd a white lamb, yet was a black sheep.

LXXX.

With other Countesses of Blank—but rank ;
 At once the *lie* and the *élite* of crowds ;
 Who pass like water filter'd in a tank,
 All purged and pious from their native clouds ;
 Or paper turn'd to money by the bank :
 No matter how or why, the passport shrouds
 The *passé* and the past ; for good society
 Is no less famed for tolerance than piety :

LXXXI.

That is, up to a certain point ; which point
 Forms the most difficult in punctuation.
 Appearances appear to form the joint
 On which it hinges in a higher station ;
 And so that no explosion cry “ aroint
 Thee, witch ! ”¹⁸ or each Medea has her Jason ;
 Or (to the point with Horace and with Pulci),
 “ *Omne tulit punctum, quæ miscuit utile dulci.* ”

LXXXII.

I can't exactly trace their rule of right,
 Which hath a little leaning to a lottery ;
 I've seen a virtuous woman put down quite
 By the mere combination of a *coterie* :
 Also a so-so matron boldly fight
 Her way back to the world by dint of plottery,
 And shine the very *Siria* of the spheres,¹⁹
 Escaping with a few slight scarless sneers.

LXXXIII.

I've seen more than I'll say :—but we will see
 How our *villeggiatura* will get on.
 The party might consist of thirty-three
 Of highest caste—the Bramins of the ton.
 I've named a few, not foremost in degree,
 But ta'en at hazard as the rhyme may run.
 By way of sprinkling, scatter'd amongst these,
 There also were some Irish absentees.

LXXXIV.

There was Parolles, too, the legal bully,
 Who limits all his battles to the bar
 And senate : when invited elsewhere, truly,
 He shows more appetite for words than war.
 There was the young bard Rackrhyme, who had newly
 Come out and glimmer'd as a six-weeks' star.
 There was Lord Pyrrho, too, the great free-thinker ;
 And Sir John Pottledeep, the mighty drinker.

LXXXV.

There was the Duke of Dash, who was a—duke,
 “ Ay, every inch a” duke ; there were twelve peers
 Like Charlemagne’s—and all such peers in look
 And intellect, that neither eyes nor ears
 For commoners had ever them mistook.

There were the six Miss Rawbolds—pretty dears !
 All song and sentiment ; whose hearts were set
 Less on a convent than a coronet.

LXXXVI.

There were four honourable Misters, whose
 Honour was more before their names than after ;
 There was the preux Chevalier de la Ruse,
 Whom France and Fortune lately deign’d to waft here,
 Whose chiefly harmless talent was to amuse ;
 But the clubs found it rather serious laughter,
 Because—such was his magic power to please,—
 The dice seem’d charm’d too with his repartees.

LXXXVII.

There was Dick Dubious, the metaphysician,
 Who loved philosophy and a good dinner ;
 Angle, the soi-disant mathematician ;
 Sir Henry Silvercup, the great race-winner.
 There was the Reverend Rodomont Precisian,
 Who did not hate so much the sin as sinner ;
 And Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet,
 Good at all things, but better at a bet.

LXXXVIII.

There was Jack Jargon, the gigantic guardsman ;
 And General Fireface, famous in the field,
 A great tactician, and no less a swordsman,
 Who ate, last war, more Yankees than he kill’d.
 There was the waggish Welsh Judge, Jefferies Hardsman,^{so}
 In his grave office so completely skill’d,
 That when a culprit came for condemnation,
 He had his judge’s joke for consolation.

LXXXIX.

Good company ’s a chess-board—there are kings,
 Queens, bishops, knights, rooks, pawns ; the world ’s a game ;
 Save that the puppets pull at their own strings ;
 Methinks gay Punch hath something of the same.
 My Muse, the butterfly, hath but her wings,
 Not stings, and flits through ether without aim,
 Alighting rarely : were she but a hornet,
 Perhaps there might be vices which would mourn it.

XC.

I had forgotten—but must not forget—
 An orator, the latest of the session,
 Who had deliver'd well a very set
 Smooth speech, his first and maidenly transgression
 Upon debate: the papers echoed yet
 With this *début*, which made a strong impression,
 And rank'd with what is every day display'd—
 “The best first speech that ever yet was made.”

XCI.

Proud of his “Hear him!” proud too of his vote,
 And lost virginity of oratory,
 Proud of his learning (just enough to quote),
 He revell'd in his Ciceronian glory:
 With memory excellent to get by rote,
 With wit to hatch a pun or tell a story,
 Graced with some merit and with more effrontery,
 “His country's pride,” he came down to the country.

XCII.

There also were two wits by acclamation,
 Longbow from Ireland, Strongbow from the Tweed,
 Both lawyers, and both men of education;
 But Strongbow's wit was of more polish'd breed:
 Longbow was rich in an imagination
 As beautiful and bounding as a steed,
 But sometimes stumbling over a potatoe,—
 While Strongbow's best things might have come from Cato.

XCIII.

Strongbow was like a new-tuned harpsichord;
 But Longbow wild as an *Æolian* harp,
 With which the winds of heaven can claim accord,
 And make a music, whether flat or sharp.
 Of Strongbow's talk you would not change a word;
 At Longbow's phrases you might sometimes carp:
 Both wits—one born so, and the other bred,
 This by his heart—his rival by his head.

XCIV.

If all these seem a heterogeneous mass,
 To be assembled at a country-seat,
 Yet think a specimen of every class
 Is better than a humdrum *tête-à-tête*.
 The days of comedy are gone, alas!
 When Congreve's fool could vie with Molière's *bêté*:
 Society is smoothed to that excess,
 That manners hardly differ more than dress.

XCV.

Our ridicules are kept in the back-ground,
 Ridiculous enough, but also dull;
 Professions too are no more to be found
 Professional; and there is nought to cull
 Of folly's fruit; for though your fools abound,
 They 're barren and not worth the pains to pull.
 Society is now one polish'd horde,
 Form'd of two mighty tribes, the *Bores* and *Bored*.

XCVI.

But from being farmers, we turn gleaners, gleaning
 The scanty but right well thresh'd ears of truth;
 And, gentle reader! when you gather meaning,
 You may be Boaz, and I—modest Ruth.
 Further I 'd quote, but Scripture, intervening,
 Forbids. A great impression in my youth
 Was made by Mrs. Adams, where she cries
 "That Scriptures out of church are blasphemies."²²

XCVII.

But when we can, we glean in this vile age
 Of chaff, although our gleanings be not grist.
 I must not quite omit the talking sage,
 Kit-Cat, the famous conversationist,
 Who, in his common-place book, had a page
 Prepared each morn for evenings. "List, oh list!"—
 "Alas, poor ghost!"—What unexpected woes
 Await those who have studied their *bons-mots*!

XCVIII.

Firstly, they must allure the conversation
 By many windings to their clever clinch;
 And secondly, must let slip no occasion,
 Nor *bate* (abate) their hearers of an *inch*,
 But take an ell—and make a great sensation,
 If possible; and thirdly, never flinch
 When some smart talker puts them to the test,
 But seize the last word, which no doubt 's the best.

XCIX.

Lord Henry and his lady were the hosts;
 The party we have touch'd on were the guests:
 Their table was a board to tempt even ghosts
 To pass the Styx for more substantial feasts.
 I will not dwell upon ragouts or roasts,
 Albeit all human history attests
 That happiness for man—the hungry sinner!—
 Since Eve ate apples, much depends on dinner.

C.

Witness the lands which "flow'd with milk and honey,"
 Held out unto the hungry Israelites :
 To this we 've added since the love of money,
 The only sort of pleasure which requites.
 Youth fades, and leaves our days no longer sunny ;
 We tire of mistresses and parasites ;
 But oh, ambrosial cash ! ah ! who would lose thee ?
 When we no more can use, or e'en abuse thee !

CI.

The gentlemen got up betimes to shoot,
 Or hunt ; the young, because they liked the sport—
 The first thing boys like after play and fruit ;
 The middle-aged, to make the day more short ;
 For *ennui* is a growth of English root,
 Though nameless in our language ; we retort
 The fact for words, and let the French translate
 That awful yawn which sleep cannot abate.

CII.

The elderly walk'd through the library,
 And tumbled books, or criticised the pictures,
 Or saunter'd through the gardens piteously,
 And made upon the hot-house several strictures,
 Or rode a nag which trotted not too high,
 Or on the morning papers read their lectures.
 Or on the watch their longing eyes would fix,
 Longing, at sixty, for the hour of six.

CIII.

But none were *géné* : the great hour of union
 Was rung by dinner's knell ; till then all were
 Masters of their own time—or in communion,
 Or solitary, as they chose to bear
 The hours, which how to pass is but to few known !
 Each rose up at his own, and had to spare
 What time he chose for dress, and broke his fast
 Where, when, and how he chose for that repast.

CIV.

The ladies—some rouged, some a little pale—
 Met the morn as they might. If fine, they rode,
 Or walk'd ; if foul, they read, or told a tale,
 Sung, or rehearsed the last dance from abroad ;
 Discuss'd the fashion which might next prevail,
 And settled bonnets by the newest code ;
 Or cramm'd twelve sheets into one little letter,
 To make each correspondent a new debtor.

CV.

For some had absent lovers, all had friends.

The earth has nothing like a she-epistle,
And hardly heaven—because it never ends.

I love the mystery of a female missal,
Which, like a creed, ne'er says all it intends,

But full of cunning as Ulysses' whistle,
When he allured poor Dolon :—you had better
Take care what you reply to such a letter.

CVI.

Then there were billiards, cards too, but *no* dice ;

Save in the clubs no man of honour plays ;—
Boats when 't was water, skaiting when 't was ice,

And the hard frosts destroy'd the scenting days :
And angling too, that solitary vice,

Whatever Isaac Walton sings or says :
The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet
Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it.²⁵

CVII.

With evening came the banquet and the wine ;

The *conversazione* ; the duet,
Attuned by voices more or less divine

(My heart or head aches with the memory yet).
The four Miss Rawbolds in a glee would shine ;

But the two youngest loved more to be set
Down to the harp—because to music's charms
They added graceful necks, white hands and arms.

CVIII.

Sometimes a dance (though rarely on field-days,

For then the gentlemen were rather tired)
Display'd some sylph-like figures in its maze :

Then there was small-talk ready when required ;
Flirtation—but decorous ; the mere praise

Of charms that should or should not be admired ;
The hunters fought their fox-hunt o'er again,
And then retreated soberly—at ten.

CIX.

The politicians, in a nook apart,

Discuss'd the world, and settled all the spheres,
The wits watch'd every loop-hole for their art,

To introduce a *bon mot*, head and ears ;
Small is the rest of those who would be smart,

A moment's good thing may have cost them years
Before they find an hour to introduce it,
And then, even *then*, some bore may make them lose it.

CX.

But all was gentle and aristocratic
 In this our party; polish'd, smooth, and cold,
 As Phidian forms cut out of marble Attic.
 There now are no Squire Westerns, as of old;
 And our Sophias are not so emphatic,
 But fair as then, or fairer to behold.
 We 've no accomplish'd blackguards, like Tom Jones,
 But gentlemen in stays, as stiff as stones.

CXI.

They separated at an early hour;
 That is, ere midnight—which is London's noon:
 But in the country ladies seek their bower
 A little earlier than the waning moon.
 Peace to the slumbers of each folded flower—
 May the rose call back its true colours soon!
 Good hours of fair cheeks are the fairest tinters,
 And lower the price of rouge—at least some winters.

NOTES TO CANTO XIII.

Note 1. Stanza vii.

"Sir, I like a good hater."—BOSWELL'S *Johnson*.

Note 2. Stanza xii.

"Your husband is in his old lunes again."—*Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Note 3. Stanza xiii.

"Davus sum, non Œdipus."—TER.

Note 4. Stanza xviii.

"'T is not in mortals to command success;
But we 'll do more, Sempronius—we 'll deserve it."—*Cato*.

Note 5. Stanza 'xxvi.

With every thing that pretty *bin*,
My lady sweet, arise.—SHAKESPEARE.

Note 6. Stanza xli.

"The creed of Zoroaster, which naturally occurs to unassisted reason as a mode of accounting for the mingled existence of good and evil in the visible world,—that belief which, in one modification or another, supposes the co-existence of a benevolent and malevolent principle, which contend together without either being able decisively to prevail over his antagonist,—leads the fear and awe deeply impressed on the human mind to the worship as well of the author of evil, so tremendous in all the effects of which credulity accounts him the primary cause, as to that of his great opponent, who is loved and adored as the father of all that is good and bountiful. Nay, such is the timid servility of human nature, that the worshippers will neglect the altar of the Author of good, rather than that of Arimanes; trusting with indifference to the well-known mercy of the one, while they shrink from the idea of irritating the vengeful jealousy of the awful father of evil."—WALTER SCOTT, *Demonology*.

Note 7. Stanza xlv.

"Arcades ambo."

Note 8. Stanza xlvii.

"Thus the rich travel."

Note 9. Stanza lv.

"The front of Newstead Abbey has a most noble and majestic appearance; being built in the form of the west end of a cathedral, adorned with rich carvings and lofty pinnacles."—Art. *Newstead*, in *Beauties of England*, vol. xii.

"How sweetly in front looked the transparent water, and the light of religious remains (equalled by no architecture scarcely in the kingdom, except that of York cathedral), backed by the most splendid field beauties, diversified by the swells of the earth on which they were rooted!"—THOROTON'S *Nottinghamshire*.

Note 10. Stanza lxi.

"In the bow-window of the Hall there are yet the arms of Newstede Priory, viz. England, with a chief azure, in the middle whereof is the Virgin Mary with Babe or."—THOROTON.

Note 11. Stanza lxiv.

"Next to the apartment called King Edward the Third's room, on account of that monarch having slept there, is the sounding gallery,—so called from a very remarkable echo which it possesses."—Art. *Newstead*, in *Beauties of England*, vol. xii.

Note 12. Stanza lxxv.

"From the windows of the gallery over the cloisters, we see the cloister court with a basin in the centre, used as a stew for fish," &c.—*Ibid.*

Note 13. Stanza lxxvi.

The cloisters exactly resemble those of Westminster Abbey; only on a smaller scale; but possessing, if possible, a more venerable appearance. These were the cloisters of the ancient abbey, and many of its ancient tenants now lie in silent repose under the flagged pavement. The ancient chapel, too, is still entire; its ceiling is a very handsome specimen of the Gothic style of springing arches."—*Ibid.*

Note 14. Stanza lxxi.

Salvator Rosa.

Note 15. Stanza lxxii.

If I err not, "Your Dane" is one of Iago's Catalogue of Nations "exquisite in their drinking."

Note 16. Stanza lxxviii.

In Assyria.

Note 17. Stanza lxxviii.

For a graphic account of Melton Mowbray, the head-quarters of the English chase, see *Quarterly Review*, vol. xlvii, p. 216.

Note 18. Stanza lxxx.

"Aroint thee, witch! the rump-fed ronyon cries."—*Macbeth*.

Note 19. Stanza lxxxii.

Siria, i. e. bitch-star.

Note 20. Stanza lxxxviii.

George Hardinge, Esq., M. S., one of the Welsh Judges, died in 1816.

Note 21. Stanza xcii.

Curran and Erskine.

Note 22. Stanza xcvi.

"Mrs. Adams answered Mr. Adams, that it was blasphemous to talk of Scripture out of church." This dogma was broached to her husband—the best christian in any book.—See *Joseph Andrews*, in the latter chapters.

Note 23. Stanza cvi.

It would have taught him humanity at least. This sentimental savage, whom it is a mode to quote (amongst the novelists) to show their sympathy for innocent sports and old songs, teaches how to sew up frogs, and break their legs by way of experiment, in addition to the art of angling,—the cruelest, the coldest, and the stupidest of pretended sports. They may talk about the beauties of nature, but the angler merely thinks of his dish of fish; he has no leisure to take his eyes from off the streams, and a single *bit* is worth to him more than all the scenery around. Besides, some fish bite best on a rainy day. The whale, the stark, and the tunny fishery have somewhat of noble and perilous in them; even net-fishing, trawling, &c., are more humane and useful—but angling!—No angler can be a good man.

"One of the best men I ever knew—as humane, delicate-minded, generous, and excellent a creature as any in the world—was an angler: true, he angled with painted flies, and would have been incapable of the extravagances of I. Walton."

The above addition was made by a friend in reading over the MS.—"Audi alteram partem."—I leave it to counterbalance my own observation.

CANTO XIV.

I.

IF from great Nature's or our own abyss
 Of thought we could but snatch a certainty,
 Perhaps mankind might find the path they miss—
 But then 't would spoil much good philosophy.
 One system eats another up, and this
 Much as old Saturn ate his progeny ;
 For when his pious consort gave him stones
 In lieu of sons, of these he made no bones.

II.

BUT system doth reverse the Titan's breakfast,
 And eats her parents, albeit the digestion
 Is difficult. Pray tell me, can you make fast,
 After due search, your faith to any question ?
 Look back o'er ages, ere unto the stake fast
 You bind yourself, and call some mode the best one.
 Nothing more true than *not* to trust your senses ;
 And yet, what are your other evidences ?

III.

FOR me, I know nought ; nothing I deny,
 Admit, reject, condemn ; and what know *you*,
 Except perhaps that you were born to die ?
 And both may after all turn out untrue.
 An age may come, font of eternity,
 When nothing shall be either old or new.
 Death, so call'd, is a thing which makes men weep,
 And yet a third of life is pass'd in sleep.

IV.

A sleep without dreams, after a rough day
 Of toil, is what we covet most ; and yet
 How clay shrinks back from more quiescent clay !
 The very suicide that pays his debt
 At once without instalments (an old way
 Of paying debts, which creditors regret)
 Lets out impatiently his rushing breath,
 Less from disgust of life than dread of death.

V.

'T is round him, near him, here, there, every where;
 And there 's a courage which grows out of fear,
 Perhaps of all most desperate, which will dare
 The worst to *know* it :—when the mountains rear
 Their peaks beneath your human foot, and there
 You look down o'er the precipice, and drear
 The gulf of rock yawns,—you can't gaze a minute
 Without an awful wish to plunge within it.

VI.

'T is true, you don't—but, pale and struck with terror,
 Retire : but look into your past impression !
 And you will find, though shuddering at the mirror
 Of your own thoughts, in all their self confession,
 The lurking bias, be it truth or error,
 To the *unknown*; a secret prepossession,
 To plunge with all your fears—but where? You know not,
 And that 's the reason why you do—or do not.

VII.

But what 's this to the purpose? you will say.
 Gent. reader, nothing; a mere speculation,
 For which my sole excuse is—'t is my way.
 Sometimes *with* and sometimes without occasion,
 I write what 's uppermost, without delay;
 This narrative is not meant for narration,
 But a mere airy and fantastic basis,
 To build up common things with common places.

VIII.

You know, or don't know, that great Bacon saith,
 “ Fling up a straw, 't will show the way the wind blows ; ”
 And such a straw, borne on by human breath,
 Is poesy, according as the mind glows ;
 A paper-kite which flies 'twixt life and death,
 A shadow which the onward soul behind throws
 And mine 's a bubble not blown up for praise,
 But just to play with, as an infant plays.

IX.

The world is all before me—or behind :
 For I have seen a portion of that same,
 And quite enough for me to keep in mind ;
 Of passions too, I 've proved enough to blame,
 To the great pleasure of our friends, mankind,
 Who like to mix some slight alloy with fame :
 For I was rather famous in my time,
 Until I fairly knock'd it up with rhyme.

X.

I 've brought this world about my ears, and eke
 The other : that 's to say, the clergy—who
 Upon my head have bid their thunders break
 In pious libels by no means a few.
 And yet I can't help scribbling once a-week,
 Tiring old readers, nor discovering new.
 In youth I wrote because my mind was full,
 And now because I feel it growing dull.

XI.

But "why then publish?"—There are no rewards
 Of fame or profit, when the world grows weary.
 I ask in turn,—why do you play at cards?
 Why drink? Why read?—To make some hour less dreary.
 It occupies me to turn back regards
 On what I 've seen or ponder'd, sad or cheery;
 And what I write I cast upon the stream,
 To swim or sink—I 've had at least my dream.

XII.

I think that were I *certain* of success,
 I hardly could compose another line :
 So long I 've battled either more or less,
 That no defeat can drive me from the Nine.
 This feeling 't is not easy to express,
 And yet 't is not affected, I opine.
 In play, there are two pleasures for your chusing—
 The one is winning, and the other losing.

XIII.

Besides, my Muse by no means deals in fiction :
 She gathers a repertory of facts,
 Of course with some reserve and slight restriction,
 But mostly sings of human things and acts—
 And that 's one cause she meets with contradiction ;
 For too much truth, at first sight, ne'er attracts ;
 And were her object only what 's call'd glory,
 With more ease too, she 'd tell a different story.

XIV.

Love, war, a tempest—surely there 's variety ;
 Also a seasoning slight of lucubration ;
 A bird's-eye view too of that wild, Society ;
 A slight glance thrown on men of every station.
 If you have nought else, here 's at least satiety
 Both in performance and in preparation ;
 And though these lines should only line portmanteaus,
 Trade will be all the better for these cantos.

	AA	
	II	II
W	W	W
AA	AA	AA
II	II	II

XV.

The portion of this world which I at present
 Have taken up to fill the following sermon,
 Is one of which there 's no description recent :
 The reason why, is easy to determine :
 Although it seems both prominent and pleasant,
 There is a sameness in its gems and ermine,
 A dull and family likeness through all ages,
 Of no great promise for poetic pages.

XVI.

With much to excite, there 's little to exalt ;
 Nothing that speaks to all men and all times ;
 A sort of varnish over every fault ;
 A kind of common-place, even in their crimes ;
 Factitious passions, wit without much salt,
 A want of that true nature which sublimates
 Whate'er it shows with truth ; a smooth monotony
 Of character, in those at least who have got any.

XVII.

Sometimes, indeed, like soldiers off parade,
 They break their ranks and gladly leave the drill ;
 But then the roll-call draws them back afraid,
 And they must be or seem what they were : still
 Doubtless it is a brilliant masquerade ;
 But when of the first sight you 've had your fill,
 It palls—at least it did so upon me,
 This paradise of pleasure and *ennui*.

XVIII.

When we have made our love, and gamed our gaming,
 Dress'd, voted, shone, and, may be, something more
 With dandies dined ; heard senators declaiming ;
 Seen beauties brought to market by the score ;
 Sad rakes to sadder husbands chastely taming ;
 There 's little left but to be bored or bore.
 Witness those "*ci-devant jeunes hommes*" who stem
 The stream, nor leave the world which leaveth them.

XIX.

'T is said—indeed a general complaint—
 That no one has succeeded in describing
 The *monde* exactly as they ought to paint.
 Some say, that authors only snatch, by bribing
 The porter, some slight scandals strange and quaint,
 To furnish matter for their moral gibing ;
 And that their books have but one style in common—
 My lady's prattle, filter'd through her woman.

XX.

But this can't well be true, just now ; for writers
 Are grown of the *beau monde* a part potential :
 I 've seen them balance even the scale with fighters,
 Especially when young, for that 's essential.
 Why do their sketches fail them as inditers
 Of what they deem themselves most consequential,
 The real portrait of the highest tribe ?
 'T is that, in fact, there 's little to describe.

XXI.

"*Haud ignara loquor :*" these are *Nugæ* "*quarum*
Pars parva fui," but still art and part.
 Now I could much more easily sketch a harem,
 A battle, wreck, or history of the heart,
 Than these things ; and besides, I wish to spare 'em,
 For reasons which I chuse to keep apart.
 "*Vetabo Cereris sacrum qui vulgaret*"—
 Which means, that vulgar people must not share it.

XXII.

And therefore what I throw off is ideal—
 Lower'd, leaven'd, like a history of freemasons,
 Which bears the same relation to the real,
 As Captain Parry's voyage may do to Jason's.
 The grand arcanum 's not for men to see all ;
 My music has some mystic diapasons ;
 And there is much which could not be appreciated
 In any manner by the uninitiated.

XXIII.

Alas ! worlds fall—and woman, since she fell'd
 The world (as, since that history, less polite
 Than true, hath been a creed so strictly held),
 Has not yet given up the practice quite.
 Poor thing of usages ! coerced, compell'd,
 Victim when wrong, and martyr oft when right,
 Condemn'd to child-bed, as men for their sins
 Have shaving too entail'd upon their chins,—

XXIV.

A daily plague which, in the aggregate,
 May average on the whole with parturition.
 But as to women, who can penetrate
 The real sufferings of their she-condition ?
 Man's very sympathy with their estate
 Has much of selfishness and more suspicion.
 Their love, their virtue, beauty, education,
 But form good housekeepers, to breed a nation.

XXV.

All this were very well, and can't be better ;
 But even this is difficult, Heaven knows !
 So many troubles from her birth beset her,
 Such small distinction between friends and foes,
 The gilding wears so soon from off her fetter,
 That——but ask any woman if she 'd chuse
 (Take her at thirty, that is) to have been
 Female or male ? a school-boy or a queen ?

XXVI.

“ Petticoat influence ” is a great reproach,
 Which e'en those who obey would fain be thought
 To fly from, as from hungry pikes a roach ;
 But, since beneath it upon earth we 're brought
 By various joltings of life's hackney-coach,
 I for one venerate a petticoat—
 A garment of a mystical sublimity,
 No matter whether russet, silk, or dimity.

XXVII.

Much I respect, and much I have adored,
 In my young days, that chaste and goodly veil,
 Which holds a treasure, like a miser's hoard,
 And more attracts by all it doth conceal—
 A golden scabbard on a Damasque sword,
 A loving letter with a mystic seal,
 A cure for grief—for what can ever rankle
 Before a petticoat and peeping ankle ?

XXVIII.

And when upon a silent, sullen day,
 With a sirocco, for example, blowing—
 When even the sea looks dim with all its spray,
 And sulkily the river's ripple 's flowing,
 And the sky shows that very ancient gray,
 The sober, sad antithesis to glowing,—
 'T is pleasant, if *then* any thing is pleasant,
 To catch a glimpse even of a pretty peasant.

XXIX.

We left our heroes and our heroines
 In that fair clime which don't depend on climate,
 Quite independent of the zodiac's signs,
 Though certainly more difficult to rhyme at,
 Because the sun and stars, and aught that shines,
 Mountains, and all we can be most sublime at,
 Are there oft dull and dreary as a *dun*—
 Whether a sky's or tradesman's is all one.

XXX.

An in-door life is less poetical;
 And out of door hath showers, and mists, and sleet,
 With which I could not brew a pastoral.
 But be it as it may, a bard must meet
 All difficulties, whether great or small,
 To spoil his undertaking or complete,
 And work away like spirit upon matter,
 Embarrass'd somewhat both with fire and water.

XXXI.

Juan—in this respect at least like saints—
 Was all things unto people of all sorts,
 And lived contentedly, without complaints,
 In camps, in ships, in cottages, or courts—
 Born with that happy soul which seldom faints,
 And mingling modestly in toils or sports.
 He likewise could be most things to all women,
 Without the coxcombry of certain *she*-men.

XXXII.

A fox-hunt to a foreigner is strange;
 'T is also subject to the double danger
 Of tumbling first, and having in exchange
 Some pleasant jesting at the awkward stranger;
 But Juan had been early taught to range
 The wilds, as doth an Arab turn'd avenger,
 So that his horse, or charger, hunter, hack,
 Knew that he had a rider on his back.

XXXIII.

And now in this new field, with some applause,
 He clear'd hedge, ditch, and double post, and rail,
 And never *craned*,^s and made but few *faux pas*,
 And only fretted when the scent 'gan fail.
 He broke, 't is true, some statutes of the laws
 Of hunting—for the sagest youth is frail;
 Rode o'er the hounds, it may be, now and then,
 And once o'er several country gentlemen.

XXXIV.

But, on the whole, to general admiration
 He acquitted both himself and horse: the squires
 Marvell'd at merit of another nation;
 The boors cried "Dang it! who 'd have thought it?" Sires,
 The Nestors of the sporting generation,
 Swore praises, and recall'd their former fires;
 The huntsman's self relented to a grin,
 And rated him almost a whipper-in.

XXXV.

Such were his trophies ;—not of spear and shield,
 But leaps, and bursts, and sometimes foxes' brushes ;
 Yet I must own,—although in this I yield
 To patriot sympathy a Briton's blushes,—
 He thought at heart like courtly Chesterfield,
 Who, after a long chase o'er hills, dales, bushes,
 And what not, though he rode beyond all price,
 Ask'd, next day, "if men ever hunted *twice*?"

XXXVI.

He also had a quality uncommon
 To early risers after a long chase,
 Who wake in winter ere the cock can summon
 December's drowsy day to his dull race,—
 A quality agreeable to woman,
 When her soft, liquid words run on apace,
 Who likes a listener, whether saint or sinner,—
 He did not fall asleep just after dinner,

XXXVII.

But, light and airy, stood on the alert,
 And shone in the best part of dialogue,
 By humouring always what they might assert,
 And listening to the topics most in vogue ;
 Now grave, now gay, but never dull or pert ;
 And smiling but in secret—cunning rogue !
 He ne'er presumed to make an error clearer ;
 In short, there never was a better hearer.

XXXVIII.

And then he danced ;—all foreigners excel
 The serious Angles in the eloquence
 Of pantomime ;—he danced, I say, right well,
 With emphasis, and also with good sense—
 A thing in footing indispensable :
 He danced without theatrical pretence,
 Not like a ballet-master in the van
 Of his drill'd nymphs, but like a gentleman.

XXXIX.

Chaste were his steps, each kept within due bound,
 And elegance was sprinkled o'er his figure ;
 Like swift Camilla, he scarce skimm'd the ground,
 And rather held in than put forth his vigour ;
 And then he had an ear for music's sound,
 Which might defy a crotchet critic's rigour.
 Such classic *pas*—*sans* flaws—set off our hero,
 He glanced like a personified bolero ;

XL.

Or, like a flying hour before Aurora,
 In Guido's famous fresco, which alone
 Is worth a tour to Rome, although no more a
 Remnant were there of the old world's sole throne.
 The *tout ensemble* of his movements wore a
 Grace of the soft ideal, seldom shown,
 And ne'er to be described; for, to the dolour
 Of bards and prozers, words are void of colour.

XLI.

No marvel then he was a favourite;
 A full-grown Cupid, very much admired;
 A little spoil'd, but by no means so quite;
 At least he kept his vanity retired.
 Such was his tact, he could alike delight
 The chaste, and those who 're not so much inspired
 The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke, who loved *tracasserie*,
 Began to treat him with some small *agacerie*.

XLII.

She was a fine and somewhat full-blown *blonde*,
 Desirable, distinguish'd, celebrated
 For several winters in the grand, *grand monde*.
 I'd rather not say what might be related
 Of her exploits, for this were ticklish ground;
 Besides there might be falsehood in what's stated:
 Her late performance had been a dead set
 At Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

XLIII.

This noble personage began to look
 A little black upon this new flirtation;
 But such small licences must lovers brook,
 Mere freedoms of the female corporation.
 Woe to the man who ventures a rebuke!
 'T will but precipitate a situation
 Extremely disagreeable, but common
 To calculators when they count on woman.

XLIV.

The circle smiled, then whisper'd, and then sneer'd;
 The misses bridled, and the matrons frown'd;
 Some hoped things might not turn out as they fear'd;
 Some would not deem such women could be found;
 Some ne'er believed one half of what they heard;
 Some look'd perplex'd, and others look'd profound;
 And several pitied with sincere regret
 Poor Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

XLV.

But what is odd, none ever named the duke,
 Who, one might think, was something in the affair.
 True, he was absent, and 't was rumour'd, took
 But small concern about the when, or where,
 Or what his consort did : if he could brook
 Her gaieties, none had a right to stare :
 Theirs was that best of unions, past all doubt,
 Which never meets, and therefore can't fall out.

XLVI.

But, oh! that I should ever pen so sad a line!
 Fired with an abstract love of virtue, she,
 My Dian of the Ephesians, Lady Adeline,
 Began to think the duchess' conduct free ;
 Regretting much that she had chosen so bad a line,
 And waxing chiller in her courtesy,
 Look'd grave and pale to see her friend's fragility,
 For which most friends reserve their sensibility.

XLVII.

There 's nought in this bad world like sympathy :
 'T is so becoming to the soul and face,
 Sets to soft music the harmonious sigh,
 And robes sweet friendship in a Brussels lace.
 Without a friend, what were humanity,
 To hunt our errors up with a good grace?
 Consoling us with—"Would you had thought twice!
 Ah! if you had but follow'd my advice!"

XLVIII.

Oh, Job! you had two friends : one 's quite enough,
 Especially when we are ill at ease ;
 They are but bad pilots when the weather 's rough,
 Doctors less famous for their cures than fees.
 Let no man grumble when his friends fall off,
 As they will do like leaves at the first breeze :
 When your affairs come round, one way or t' other,
 Go to the coffee-house, and take another.⁴

XLIX.

But this is not my maxim : had it been,
 Some heart-aches had been spared me ; yet I care not—
 I would not be a tortoise in his screen
 Of stubborn shell, which waves and weather wear not.
 'T is better on the whole to have felt and seen
 That which humanity may bear, or bear not :
 'T will teach discernment to the sensitive,
 And not to pour their ocean in a sieve.

L.

Of all the horrid, hideous notes of woe,
 Sadder than owl-songs or the midnight blast,
 Is that portentous phrase, "I told you so,"
 Utter'd by friends, those prophets of the past,
 Who, 'stead of saying what you now should do,
 Own they foresaw that you would fall at last,
 And solace your slight lapse 'gainst *bonos mores*,
 With a long memorandum of old stories.

LI.

The Lady Adeline's serene severity
 Was not confined to feeling for her friend,
 Whose fame she rather doubted with posterity,
 Unless her habits should begin to mend ;
 But Juan also shared in her austerity,
 But mix'd with pity, pure as e'er was penn'd ;
 His inexperience moved her gentle ruth,
 And (as her junior by six weeks) his youth.

LII.

These forty days' advantage of her years—
 And hers were those which can face calculation,
 Boldly referring to the list of peers,
 And noble births, nor dread the enumeration—
 Gave her a right to have maternal fears
 For a young gentleman's fit education,
 Though she was far from that leap-year, whose leap,
 In female dates, strikes time all of a heap.

LIII.

This may be fix'd at somewhere before thirty—
 Say seven-and-twenty ; for I never knew
 The strictest in chronology and virtue
 Advance beyond, while they could pass for new.
 Oh, Time ! why dost not pause ? Thy scythe, so dirty
 With rust, should surely cease to hack and hew.
 Reset it ; shave more smoothly, also slower,
 If but to keep thy credit as a mower.

LIV.

But Adeline was far from that ripe age,
 Whose ripeness is but bitter at the best :
 'T was rather her experience made her sage,
 For she had seen the world, and stood its test.
 As I have said in—I forget what page ;
 My Muse despises reference, as you've guess'd
 By this time ;—but strike six from seven-and-twenty,
 And you will find her sum of years in plenty.

LV.

At sixteen she came out; presented, vaunted,
 She put all coronets into commotion;
 At seventeen too the world was still enchanted
 With the new Venus of their brilliant ocean:
 At eighteen, though below her feet still panted
 A hecatomb of suiters with devotion,
 She had consented to create again
 That Adam, call'd "the happiest of men."

LVI.

Since then she had sparkled through three glowing winters,
 Admired, adored; but also so correct,
 That she had puzzled all the acutest hinters,
 Without the apparel of being circumspect;
 They could not even glean the slightest splinters
 From off the marble, which had no defect.
 She had also snatch'd a moment since her marriage
 To bear a son and heir—and one miscarriage.

LVII.

Fondly the wheeling fire-flies flew around her,
 Those little glitterers of the London night;
 But none of these possess'd a sting to wound her—
 She was a pitch beyond a coxcomb's flight.
 Perhaps she wish'd an aspirant profounder;
 But, whatsoe'er she wish'd, she acted right;
 And whether coldness, pride, or virtue, dignify
 A woman, so she 's good, what does it signify?

LVIII.

I hate a motive like a lingering bottle,
 Which with the landlord makes too long a stand,
 Leaving all claretless the unmoisten'd throttle,
 Especially with politics on hand;
 I hate it, as I hate a drove of cattle,
 Who whirl the dust as simoons whirl the sand;
 I hate it, as I hate an argument,
 A laureate's ode, or servile peer's "content."

LIX.

'T is sad to hack into the roots of things,
 They are so much intertwined with the earth:
 So that the branch a goodly verdure flings,
 I reckon not if an acorn gave it birth.
 To trace all actions to their secret springs
 Would make indeed some melancholy mirth;
 But this is not at present my concern,
 And I refer you to wise Oxenstiern.⁵

LX.

With the kind view of saving an *éclat*,
 Both to the duchess and diplomatist,
 The Lady Adeline, as soon 's she saw
 That Juan was unlikely to resist—
 (For foreigners don't know that a *faux pas*
 In England ranks quite on a different list
 From those of other lands, unblest'd with juries,
 Whose verdict for such sin a perfect cure is)—

LXI.

The Lady Adeline resolved to take
 Such measures as she thought might best impede
 The further progress of this sad mistake.
 She thought with some simplicity indeed ;
 But innocence is bold e'en at the stake,
 And simple in the world, and doth not need
 Nor use those palisades by dames erected,
 Whose virtue lies in never being detected.

LXII.

It was not that she fear'd the very worst :
 His grace was an enduring, married man,
 And was not likely all at once to burst
 Into a scene, and swell the clients' clan
 Of Doctors' Commons ; but she dreaded first
 The magic of her grace's talisman,
 And next a quarrel (as he seem'd to fret)
 With Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

LXIII.

Her grace too pass'd for being an *intrigante*,
 And somewhat *méchante* in her amorous sphere ;
 One of those pretty, precious plagues, which haunt
 A lover with caprices soft and dear,
 That like to *make* a quarrel, when they can't
 Find one, each day of the delightful year ;
 Bewitching, torturing, as they freeze or glow,
 And—what is worst of all—won't let you go :

LXIV.

The sort of thing to turn a young man's head,
 Or make a Werter of him in the end.
 No wonder then a purer soul should dread
 This sort of chaste *liaison* for a friend ;
 It were much better to be wed or dead,
 Than wear a heart a woman loves to rend.
 'T is best to pause, and think, ere you rush on,
 If that a *bonne fortune* be really *bonne*.

LXV.

And first, in the o'erflowing of her heart,
 Which really knew or thought it knew no guile,
 She call'd her husband now and then apart,
 And bade him counsel Juan. With a smile
 Lord Henry heard her plans of artless art
 To wean Don Juan from the siren's wile;
 And answer'd, like a statesman or a prophet,
 In such guise that she could make nothing of it.

LXVI.

Firstly, he said, "he never interfered
 In any body's business but the king's:"
 Next, that "he never judged from what appear'd,
 Without strong reason, of those sorts of things:"
 Thirdly, that "Juan had more brain than beard,
 And was not to be held in leading-strings:"
 And fourthly, what need hardly be said twice,
 "That good but rarely came from good advice."

LXVII.

And, therefore, doubtless to approve the truth
 Of the last axiom, he advised his spouse
 To leave the parties to themselves, forsooth,
 At least as far as *bienséance* allows:
 That time would temper Juan's faults of youth;
 That young men rarely made monastic vows;
 That opposition only more attaches——
 But here a messenger brought in dispatches:

LXVIII.

And being of the council call'd "the privy,"
 Lord Henry walk'd into his cabinet,
 To furnish matter for some future Livy
 To tell how he reduced the nation's debt;
 And if their full contents I do not give ye,
 It is because I do not know them yet,
 But I shall add them in a brief appendix,
 To come between mine epic and its index.

LXIX.

But ere he went, he added a slight hint,
 Another gentle common-place or two,
 Such as are coin'd in conversation's mint,
 And pass, for want of better, though not new;
 Then broke his packet, to see what was in 't,
 And having casually glanced it through,
 Retired; and, as he went out, calmly kiss'd her,
 Less like a young wife than an aged sister.

LXX.

He was a cold, good, honourable man,
 Proud of his birth, and proud of every thing ;
 A goodly spirit for a state divan,
 A figure fit to walk before a king ;
 Tall, stately, form'd to lead the courtly van
 On birth-days, glorious with a star and string ;
 The very model of a chamberlain—
 And such I mean to make him when I reign.

LXXI.

But there was something wanting on the whole—
 I don't know what, and therefore cannot tell—
 Which pretty women—the sweet souls!—call *soul*,
Certes it was not body ; he was well
 Proportion'd, as a poplar or a pole,
 A handsome man, that human miracle ;
 And in each circumstance of love or war
 Had still preserved his perpendicular.

LXXII.

Still there was something wanting, as I've said—
 That undefinable *je ne sais quoi*,
 Which, for what I know, may of yore have led
 To Homer's Iliad, since it drew to Troy
 The Greek Eve, Helen, from the Spartan's bed ;
 Though on the whole, no doubt, the Dardan boy
 Was much inferior to King Menelaus ;—
 But thus it is some women will betray us.

LXXIII.

There is an awkward thing which much perplexes,
 Unless like wise Tiresias we had proved
 By turns the difference of the several sexes ;
 Neither can show quite *how* they would be loved :
 The sensual for a short time but connects us—
 The sentimental boasts to be unmoved ;
 But both together form a kind of centaur,
 Upon whose back 't is better not to venture.

LXXIV.

A something all-sufficient for the *heart*
 Is that for which the sex are always seeking ;
 But how to fill up that same vacant part ?
 There lies the rub—and this they are but weak in.
 Frail mariners afloat without a chart,
 They run before the wind through high seas breaking ;
 And when they've made the shore through every shock,
 'T is odd, or odds, it may turn out a rock.

LXXV.

There is a flower call'd "love in idleness"
 For which see Shakspeare's ever-blooming garden;—
 I will not make his great description less,
 And beg his British godship's humble pardon,
 If, in my extremity of rhyme's distress,
 I touch a single leaf where he is warden;
 But though the flower is different, with the French
 Or Swiss Rousseau, cry "*Voilà la pervenche!*"

LXXVI.

Eureka! I have found it! What I mean
 To say is, not that love is idleness,
 But that in love such idleness has been
 An accessory, as I have cause to guess.
 Hard labour 's an indifferent go-between;
 Your men of business are not apt to express
 Much passion, since the merchant-ship, the Argo,
 Convey'd Medea as her supercargo.

LXXVII.

Beatus ille procul from *negotiis*,
 Saith Horace; the great little poet's wrong;
 His other maxim, *Noscitur a sociis*,
 Is much more to the purpose of his song;
 Though even that were sometimes too ferocious,
 Unless good company be kept too long;
 But, in his teeth, whate'er their state or station,
 Thrice happy they who *have* an occupation!

LXXVIII.

Adam exchanged his paradise for ploughing;
 Eve made up millinery with fig-leaves—
 The earliest knowledge from the tree so knowing,
 As far as I know, that the church receives:
 And since that time it need not cost much showing,
 That many of the ills o'er which man grieves,
 And still more woman, spring from not employing
 Some hours to make the remnant worth enjoying.

LXXIX.

And hence high life is oft a dreary void,
 A rack of pleasures, where we must invent
 A something wherewithal to be annoy'd.
 Bards may sing what they please about *content*;
Contented, when translated, means but cloy'd;
 And hence arise the woes of sentiment,
 Blue devils, and blue-stockings, and romances
 Reduced to practice, and perform'd like dances.

LXXX.

I do declare, upon an affidavit,
 Romances I ne'er read like those I've seen;
 Nor, if unto the world I ever gave it,
 Would some believe that such a tale had been:
 But such intent I never had, nor have it;
 Some truths are better kept behind a screen,
 Especially when they would look like lies;
 I therefore deal in generalities.

LXXXI.

"An oyster may be cross'd in love,"⁶—and why?
 Because he mopeth idly in his shell,
 And heaves a lonely subterraqueous sigh,
 Much as a monk may do within his cell:
 And *à propos* of monks, their piety
 With sloth hath found it difficult to dwell;
 Those vegetables of the catholic creed
 Are apt exceedingly to run to seed.

LXXXII.

Oh, Wilberforce! thou man of black renown,
 Whose merit none enough can sing or say,
 Thou hast struck one immense colossus down,
 Thou moral Washington of Africa!
 But there's another little thing, I own,
 Which you should perpetrate some summer's day,
 And set the other half of earth to rights:
 You have freed the *blacks*—now pray shut up the whites.

LXXXIII.

Shut up the bald-coot bully Alexander;⁷
 Ship off the Holy Threeto Senegal;
 Teach them that "sauce for goose is sauce for gander,"
 And ask them how *they* like to be in thrall.
 Shut up each high heroic salamander,
 Who eats fire gratis (since the pay's but small);
 Shut up—no, *not* the king, but the Pavilion,⁸
 Or else 't will cost us all another million.

LXXXIV.

Shut up the world at large; let Bedlam out,
 And you will be perhaps surprised to find
 All things pursue exactly the same route,
 As now with those of *soi-disant* sound mind.
 This I could prove beyond a single doubt,
 Were there a jot of sense among mankind;
 But till that *point d'appui* is found, alas!
 Like Archimedes, I leave earth as 't was.

LXXXV.

Our gentle Adeline had one defect—
 Her heart was vacant, though a splendid mansion ;
 Her conduct had been perfectly correct,
 As she had seen nought claiming its expansion.
 A wavering spirit may be easier wreck'd,
 Because 't is frailer, doubtless, than a stanch one ;
 But when the latter works its own undoing,
 Its inner crash is like an earthquake's ruin.

LXXXVI.

She loved her lord, or thought so ; but *that* love
 Cost her an effort, which is a sad toil,
 The stone of Sysiphus, if once we move
 Our feelings 'gainst the nature of the soil.
 She had nothing to complain of, or reprove,
 No bickerings, no connubial turmoil :
 Their union was a model to behold,
 Serene and noble,—conjugal, but cold.

LXXXVII.

There was no great disparity of years,
 Though much in temper ; but they never clash'd :
 They moved like stars united in their spheres,
 Or like the Rhone by Lemman's waters wash'd,
 Where mingled and yet separate appears
 The river from the lake, all bluely dash'd
 Through the serene and placid glassy deep,
 Which fain would lull its river-child to sleep.

LXXXVIII.

Now, when she once had ta'en an interest
 In any thing, however she might flatter
 Herself that her intentions were the best,
 Intense intentions are a dangerous matter :
 Impressions were much stronger than she guess'd,
 And gather'd as they run, like growing water,
 Upon her mind ; the more so, as her breast
 Was not at first too readily impress'd.

LXXXIX.

But when it was, she had that lurking demon
 Of double nature, and thus doubly named—
 Firmness yclept in heroes, kings, and seamen,
 That is, when they succeed ; but greatly blamed
 As *obstinacy*, both in men and women,
 Whene'er their triumph pales, or star is tamed :
 And 't will perplex the casuists in morality,
 To fix the due bounds of this dangerous quality.

XC.

Had Bonaparte won at Waterloo,
 It had been firmness; now 't is pertinacity :
 Must the event decide between the two ?
 I leave it to your people of sagacity
 To draw the line between the false and true,
 If such can e'er be drawn by man's capacity :
 My business is with Lady Adeline,
 Who in her way too was a heroine.

XCI.

She knew not her own heart ; then how should I ?
 I think not she was *then* in love with Juan :
 If so, she would have had the strength to fly
 The wild sensation, unto her a new one ;
 She merely felt a common sympathy
 (I will not say it was a false or true one)
 In him, because she thought he was in danger—
 Her husband's friend, her own, young, and a stranger.

XCII.

She was, or thought she was, his friend—and this
 Without the farce of friendship, or romance
 Of Platonism, which leads so oft amiss
 Ladies who have studied friendship but in France,
 Or Germany, where people *purely* kiss.
 To thus much Adeline would not advance ;
 But of such friendship as man's may to man be,
 She was as capable as woman can be.

XCIII.

No doubt the secret influence of the sex
 Will there, as also in the ties of blood,
 An innocent predominance annex,
 And tune the concord to a finer mood.
 If free from passion, which all friendship checks,
 And your true feelings fully understood,
 No friend like to a woman earth discovers,
 So that you have not been nor will be lovers.

XCIV.

Love bears within its breast the very germ
 Of change ; and how should this be otherwise ?
 That violent things more quickly find a term
 Is shown through nature's whole analogies :
 And how should the most fierce of all be firm ?
 Would you have endless lightning in the skies ?
 Methinks love's very title says enough :
 How should "the *tender* passion" e'er be *tough* ?

XCV.

Alas ! by all experience, seldom yet
 (I merely quote what I have heard from many)
 Had lovers not some reason to regret
 The passion which made Solomon a zany.
 I've also seen some wives (not to forget
 The marriage state, the best or worst of any)
 Who were the very paragons of wives,
 Yet made the misery of at least two lives.

XCVI.

I've also seen some female *friends* ('t is odd,
 But true—as, if expedient, I could prove)
 That faithful were, through thick and thin, abroad,
 At home, far more than ever yet was love—
 Who did not quit me when oppression trod
 Upon me ; whom no scandal could remove ;
 Who fought, and fight, in absence too, my battles,
 Despite the snake society's loud rattles.

XCVII.

Whether Don Juan and chaste Adeline
 Grew friends in this or any other sense,
 Will be discuss'd hereafter, I opine :
 At present I am glad of a pretence
 To leave them hovering, as the effect is fine,
 And keeps the atrocious reader in *suspense* ;
 The surest way for ladies and for books
 To bait their tender or their tenter hooks.

XCVIII.

Whether they rode, or walk'd, or studied Spanish
 To read Don Quixote in the original,
 A pleasure before which all others vanish ;
 Whether their talk was of the kind call'd "small,"
 Or serious, are the topics I must banish
 To the next canto ; where, perhaps, I shall
 Say something to the purpose, and display
 Considerable talent in my way.

XCIX.

Above all, I beg all men to forbear
 Anticipating aught about the matter :
 They'll only make mistakes about the fair,
 And Juan too, especially the latter.
 And I shall take a much more serious air
 Than I have yet done in this epic satire.
 It is not clear that Adeline and Juan
 Will fall ; but if they do, 't will be their ruin.

C.

But great things spring from little :—would you think,
 That, in our youth, as dangerous a passion
 As e'er brought man and woman to the brink
 Of ruin, rose from such a slight occasion
 As few would ever dream could form the link
 Of such a sentimental situation ?
 You 'll never guess, I 'll bet you millions, millions—
 It all sprung from a harmless game at billiards.

CI.

'T is strange—but true ; for truth is always strange,
 Stranger than fiction : if it could be told,
 How much would novels gain by the exchange !
 How differently the world would men behold !
 How oft would vice and virtue places change !
 The new world would be nothing to the old,
 If some Columbus of the moral seas
 Would show mankind their soul's antipodes.

CII.

What "antres vast and deserts idle"⁹ then
 Would be discovered in the human soul !
 What icebergs in the hearts of mighty men,
 With self-love in the centre as their pole !
 What anthropophagi are nine of ten
 Of those who hold the kingdoms in control !
 Were things but only call'd by their right name,
 Cæsar himself would be ashamed of fame.

NOTES TO CANTO XIV

Note 1. Stanza xi.

"But why then publish?—Granville, the polite,
And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write."—POPE.

Note 2. Stanza xxi.

See Horace, 2d ode of the third book.

Note 3. Stanza xxxiii.

Craning—"To *crane*" is, or was, an expression used to denote a gentleman's stretching out his neck over a hedge, "to look before he leaped:"—a pause in his "vaulting ambition," which in the field doth occasion some delay and execration in those who may be immediately behind the equestrian sceptic. "Sir, if you don't chuse to take the leap, let me"—was a phrase which generally sent the aspirant on again; and to good purpose: for though "the horse and rider" might fall, they made a gap, through which, and over him and his steed, the field might follow.

Note 4. Stanza xlviii.

IN SWIFT'S OR HORACE WALPOLE'S *Letters* I think is mentioned, that somebody regretting the loss of a friend, was answered by a universal Pylades: "When I lose one, I go to the Saint James's Coffee-house, and take another."

I recollect having heard an anecdote of the same kind. Sir W. D. was a great gamester. Coming in one day to the club of which he was a member, he was observed to look melancholy. "What is the matter, Sir William?" cried Hare, of facetious memory. "Ah!" replied Sir W. "I have just *lost* poor Lady D."—"Lost! What *at*?—*Quinze* or *Hazard*?" was the consolatory rejoinder of the querist.

Note 5. Stanza lix.

The famous Chancellor Oxenstiern said to his son, on the latter expressing his surprise upon the great effects arising from petty causes in the presumed mystery of politics: "You see by this, my son, with how little wisdom the kingdoms of the world are governed." [The true story is:—young Oxenstiern, on being told he was to proceed on some diplomatic mission, expressed his doubts of his own fitness for such an office. The old Chancellor, laughing, answered,—"*Nescis, mi fili, quantula scientia gubernatur mundus.*"—E.]

Note 6. Stanza lxxxi.

See Sheridan's Critic.

Note 7. Stanza lxxxiii.

The bald-coot is a small bird of prey in marshes. The Emperor Alexander was baldish.—E.

Note 8. Stanza lxxxviii.

The King's Palace at Brighton.—E.

Note 9. Stanza cii.

See Othello, act i, sc. 3.

CANTO XV.

I.

AH!—What should follow slips from my reflection—

Whatever follows ne'ertheless may be
As *apropos* of hope or retrospection,

As though the lurking thought had follow'd free.

All present life is but an interjection,

An "Oh!" or "Ah!" of joy or misery;

Or a "Ha! ha!" or "Bah!"—a yawn, or "Pooh!"

Of which perhaps the latter is most true.

II.

But, more or less, the whole 's a syncope,

Or a singultus—emblems of emotion,

The grand antithesis to great *ennui*,

Wherewith we break our bubbles on the ocean,

That watery outline of eternity,

Or miniature at least, as is my notion,

Which ministers unto the soul's delight,

In seeing matters which are out of sight.

III.

But all are better than the sigh suppress,

Corroding in the cavern of the heart,

Making the countenance a mask of rest,

And turning human nature to an art.

Few men dare show their thoughts of worst or best;

Dissimulation always sets apart

A corner for herself; and therefore fiction

Is that which passes with least contradiction.

IV.

Ah! who can tell? or rather, who can not

Remember, without telling, passion's errors?

The drainer of oblivion, even the sot,

Hath got blue devils for his morning mirrors:

What though on Lethe's stream he seem to float,

He cannot sink his tremors or his terrors;

The ruby glass that shakes within his hand,

Leaves a sad sediment of Time's worst sand.

V.

And as for love—Oh, love!—We will proceed.

The Lady Adeline Amundeville,
A pretty name as one would wish to read,
Must perch harmonious on my tuneful quill.
There 's music in the sighing of a reed ;
There 's music in the gushing of a rill ;
There 's music in all things, if men had ears :
Their earth is but an echo of the spheres.

VI.

The Lady Adeline, right honourable,
And honour'd, ran a risk of growing less so ;
For few of the soft sex are very stable
In their resolves—alas! that I should say so !
They differ as wine differs from its label,
When once decanted ;—I presume to guess so,
But will not swear : yet both upon occasion,
Till old, may undergo adulteration.

VII.

But Adeline was of the purest vintage,
The unmingled essence of the grape ; and yet
Bright as a new Napoleon from its mintage,
Or glorious as a diamond richly set ;
A page where Time should hesitate to print age,
And for which Nature might forego her debt—
Sole creditor whose process doth involve in 't
The luck of finding every body solvent.

VIII.

Oh, Death ! thou dunnest of all duns ! thou daily
Knockest at doors, at first with modest tap,
Like a meek tradesman when, approaching palely,
Some splendid debtor he would take by sap :
But oft denied, as patience 'gins to fail, he
Advances with exasperated rap,
And (if let in) insists, in terms unhandsome,
On ready money, or "a draft on Ransom."

IX.

Whate'er thou takest, spare awhile poor Beauty !
She is so rare, and thou hast so much prey.
What though she now and then may slip from duty,
The more 's the reason why you ought to stay.
Gaunt *gourmand* ! with whole nations for your booty,
You should be civil in a modest way :
Suppress then some slight feminine diseases,
And take as many heroes as Heaven pleases.

X.

Fair Adeline, the more ingenuous
 Where she was interested (as was said),
 Because she was not apt, like some of us,
 To like too readily, or too high bred
 To show it—points we need not now discuss—
 Would give up artlessly both heart and head
 Unto such feelings as seem'd innocent
 For objects worthy of the sentiment.

XI.

Some parts of Juan's history, which Rumour,
 That live gazette, had scatter'd to disfigure,
 She 'd heard; but women hear with more good humour
 Such aberrations than we men of rigour.
 Besides, his conduct, since in England, grew more
 Strict, and his mind assumed a manlier vigour;
 Because he had, like Alcibiades,
 The art of living in all climes with ease.

XII.

His manner was perhaps the more seductive,
 Because he ne'er seem'd anxious to seduce;
 Nothing affected, studied, or constructive
 Of coxcombry or conquest: no abuse
 Of his attractions marr'd the fair perspective,
 To indicate a Cupidon broke loose,
 And seem to say, "resist us if you can"—
 Which makes a dandy while it spoils a man.

XIII.

They are wrong—that 's not the way to set about it;
 As, if they told the truth, could well be shown.
 But, right or wrong, Don Juan was without it;
 In fact, his manner was his own alone:
 Sincere he was—at least you could not doubt it,
 In listening merely to his voice's tone.
 The devil hath not in all his quiver's choice
 An arrow for the heart like a sweet voice.

XIV.

By nature soft, his whole address held off
 Suspicion: though not timid, his regard
 Was such as rather seem'd to keep aloof,
 To shield himself, than put you on your guard:
 Perhaps, 't was hardly quite assured enough,
 But modesty 's at times its own reward,
 Like virtue; and the absence of pretension
 Will go much farther than there 's need to mention.

XV.

Serene, accomplish'd, cheerful, but not loud ;

Insinuating without insinuation ;

Observant of the foibles of the crowd,

Yet ne'er betraying this in conversation ;

Proud with the proud, yet courteously proud,

So as to make them feel he knew his station

And theirs ;—without a struggle for priority,

He neither brook'd nor claim'd superiority,

XVI.

That is, with men : with women he was what

They pleased to make or take him for ; and their

Imagination 's quite enough for that :

So that the outline 's tolerably fair.

They fill the canvass up—and *verbum sat*.

If once their phantasies be brought to bear

Upon an object, whether sad or playful,

They can transfigure brighter than a Raphael.

XVII.

Adeline, no deep judge of character,

Was apt to add a colouring from her own.

'T is thus the good will amiably err,

And eke the wise, as has been often shown.

Experience is the chief philosopher,

But saddest when his science is well known ;

And persecuted sages teach the schools

Their folly in forgetting there are fools.

XVIII.

Was it not so, great Locke ? and greater Bacon ?

Great Socrates ? And thou, diviner still,⁵

Whose lot it is by man to be mistaken,

And thy pure creed made sanction of all ill ?

Redeeming worlds to be by bigots shaken,

How was thy toil rewarded ? We might fill

Volumes with similar sad illustrations,

But leave them to the conscience of the nations.

XIX.

I perch upon an humbler promontory,

Amidst life's infinite variety :

With no great care for what is nicknamed glory,

But speculating as I cast mine eye

On what may suit or may not suit my story,

And never straining hard to versify,

I rattle on exactly as I'd talk

With any body in a ride or walk.

XX.

I don't know that there may be much ability
 Shown in this sort of desultory rhyme ;
 But there 's a conversational facility,
 Which may round off an hour upon a time.
 Of this I 'm sure at least, there 's no servility
 In mine irregularity of chime,
 Which rings what 's uppermost of new or hoary,
 Just as I feel the *improvvisatore*.

XXI.

“*Omnia vult belle Matho dicere—dic aliquando
 Et bene, dic neutrum, dic aliquando male.*”⁴
 The first is rather more than mortal can do ;
 The second may be sadly done or gaily ;
 The third is still more difficult to stand to ;
 The fourth we hear, and see, and say too, daily ;
 The whole together is what I could wish
 To serve in this conundrum of a dish.

XXII.

A modest hope—but modesty 's my *forte*,
 And pride my feeble :—let us ramble on.
 I meant to make this poem very short,
 But now I can't tell where it may not run.
 No doubt, if I had wish'd to pay my court
 To critics, or to hail the *setting* sun
 Of tyranny of all kinds, my concision
 Were more ;—but I was born for opposition.

XXIII.

But then 't is mostly on the weaker side :
 So that I verily believe if they
 Who now are basking in their full-blown pride,
 Were shaken down, and “*dogs had had their day,*”⁵
 Though at the first I might by chance deride
 Their tumble, I should turn the other way,
 And wax an ultra-royalist in loyalty,
 Because I hate even democratic royalty.

XXIV.

I think I should have made a decent spouse,
 If I had never proved the soft condition ;
 I think I should have made monastic vows,
 But for my own peculiar superstition ;
 'Gainst rhyme I never should have knock'd my brows,
 Nor broken my own head, nor that of Priscian,
 Nor worn the motley mantle of a poet,
 If some one had not told me to forego it.

XXV.

But "laissez aller"—knights and dames I sing,
 Such as the times may furnish. 'T is a flight
 Which seems at first to need no lofty wing,
 Plumed by Longinus or the Stagyrite :
 The difficulty lies in colouring
 (Keeping the due proportion still in sight)
 With nature manners which are artificial,
 And rendering general that which is especial.

XXVI.

The difference is, that in the days of old
 Men made the manners ; manners now make men—
 Pinn'd like a flock, and fleeced too in their fold,
 At least nine, and a ninth beside of ten.
 Now this at all events must render cold
 Your writers, who must either draw again
 Days better drawn before, or else assume
 The present, with their common-place costume.

XXVII.

We 'll do our best to make the best on 't :—March !
 March, my Muse ! If you cannot fly, yet flutter ;
 And when you may not be sublime, be arch,
 Or starch, as are the edicts statesmen utter.
 We surely shall find something worth research :
 Columbus found a new world in a cutter,
 Or brigantine, or pink, of no great tonnage,
 While yet America was in her non-age.

XXVIII.

When Adeline, in all her growing sense
 Of Juan's merits and his situation,
 Felt on the whole an interest intense—
 Partly perhaps because a fresh sensation,
 Or that he had an air of innocence,
 Which is for innocence a sad temptation,—
 As women hate half measures, on the whole,
 She 'gan to ponder how to save his soul.

XXIX.

She had a good opinion of advice,
 Like all who give and eke receive it gratis,
 For which small thanks are still the market price,
 Even where the article at highest rate is.
 She thought upon the subject twice or thrice,
 And morally decided, the best state is
 For morals, marriage ; and, this question carried,
 She seriously advised him to get married.

XXX.

Juan replied, with all becoming deference,
 He had a predilection for that tie ;
 But that at present, with immediate reference
 To his own circumstances, there might lie
 Some difficulties, as in his own preference,
 Or that of her to whom he might apply ;
 That still he 'd wed with such or such a lady,
 If that they were not married all already.

XXXI.

Next to the making matches for herself,
 And daughters, brothers, sisters, kith or kin,
 Arranging them like books on the same shelf,
 There 's nothing women love to dabble in
 More (like a stock-holder in growing pelf)
 Than match-making in general : 't is no sin
 Certes, but a preventative, and therefore
 That is, no doubt, the only reason wherefore.

XXXII.

But never yet (except of course a miss
 Unwed, or mistress neyer to be wed,
 Or wed already, who object to this)
 Was there chaste dame who had not in her head
 Some drama of the marriage unities,
 Observed as strictly both at board and bed,
 As those of Aristotle, though sometimes
 They turn out melodrames or pantomimes.

XXXIII.

They generally have some only son,
 Some heir to a large property, some friend
 Of an old family, some gay Sir John,
 Or grave Lord George, with whom perhaps might end
 A line, and leave posterity undone,
 Unless a marriage was applied to mend
 The prospect and their morals : and besides,
 They have at hand a blooming glut of brides.

XXXIV.

From these they will be careful to select,
 For this an heiress, and for that a beauty ;
 For one a songstress who hath no defect,
 For t' other one who promises much duty ;
 For this a lady no one can reject,
 Whose sole accomplishments were quite a booty ;
 A second for her excellent connexions ;
 A third, because there can be no objections.

XXXV.

When Rapp the harmonist embargo'd marriage⁶
 In his harmonious settlement—(which flourishes
 Strangely enough as yet without miscarriage,
 Because it breeds no more mouths than it nourishes,
 Without those sad expenses which disparage
 What Nature naturally most encourages)—
 Why call'd he “harmony” a state sans wedlock?
 Now here I have got the preacher at a dead lock.

XXXVI.

Because he either meant to sneer at harmony
 Or marriage, by divorcing them thus oddly.
 But whether reverend Rapp learn'd this in Germany
 Or no, 't is said his sect is rich and godly,
 Pious and pure, beyond what I can term any
 Of ours, although they propagate more broadly.
 My objection 's to his title, not his ritual,
 Although I wonder how it grew habitual.

XXXVII.

But Rapp is the reverse of zealous matrons,
 Who favour, *malgré* Malthus, generation—
 Professors of that genial art, and patrons
 Of all the modest part of propagation,
 Which after all at such a desperate rate runs,
 That half its produce tends to emigration,
 That sad result of passions and potatoes—
 Two weeds which pose our economic Catos.

XXXVIII.

Had Adeline read Malthus? I can't tell;
 I wish she had; his book 's the eleventh commandment,
 Which says, “thou shalt not marry”—unless *well*:
 This he (as far as I can understand) meant;
 'T is not my purpose on his views to dwell,
 Nor canvass what “so eminent a hand” meant:⁷
 But certes it conducts to lives ascetic,
 Or turning marriage into arithmetic.

XXXIX.

But Adeline, who probably presumed
 That Juan had enough of maintenance,
 Or *separate* maintenance, in case 't was doom'd—
 As on the whole it is an even chance
 That bridegrooms, after they are fairly *groom'd*,
 May retrograde a little in the dance
 Of marriage—(which might form a painter's fame,
 Like Holbein's “Dance of Death”—but 't is the same);—

XL.

But Adeline determined Juan's wedding,
 In her own mind, and that 's enough for woman.
 But then, with whom? There was the sage Miss Reading,
 Miss Raw, Miss Flaw, Miss Showman, and Miss Knowman,
 And the two fair co-heiresses Giltbedding.
 She deem'd his merits something more than common:
 All these were unobjectionable matches,
 And might go on, if well wound up, like watches.

XLI.

There was Miss Millpond, smooth as summer's sea,
 That usual paragon, an only daughter,
 Who seem'd the cream of equanimity,
 Till skimm'd—and then there was some milk and water,
 With a slight shade of blue too it might be,
 Beneath the surface; but what did it matter?
 Love 's riotous, but marriage should have quiet,
 And, being consumptive, live on a milk diet.

XLII.

And then there was the Miss Audacia Shoestring,
 A dashing *demoiselle* of good estate,
 Whose heart was fix'd upon a star or blue string;
 But whether English dukes grew rare of late,
 Or that she had not harp'd upon the true string,
 By which such sirens can attract our great,
 She took up with some foreign younger brother,
 A Russ or Turk—the one 's as good as t' other.

XLIII.

And then there was—but why should I go on,
 Unless the ladies should go off?—there was
 Indeed a certain fair and fairy one,
 Of the best class, and better than her class,
 Aurora Raby, a young star who shone
 O'er life, too sweet an image for such glass,
 A lovely being, scarcely form'd or moulded,
 A rose with all its sweetest leaves yet folded;

XLIV.

Rich, noble, but an orphan; left an only
 Child to the care of guardians good and kind;
 But still her aspect had an air so lonely!
 Blood is not water; and where shall we find
 Feelings of youth like those which overthrown lie
 By death, when we are left, alas! behind,
 To feel, in friendless palaces, a home
 Is wanting, and our best ties in the tomb?

XLV.

Early in years, and yet more infantine
 In figure, she had something of sublime
 In eyes which sadly shone, as seraphs' shine.
 All youth—but with an aspect beyond time;
 Radiant and grave—as pitying man's decline;
 Mournful—but mournful of another's crime,
 She look'd as if she sat by Eden's door,
 And grieved for those who could return no more.

XLVI.

She was a catholic too, sincere, austere,
 As far as her own gentle heart allow'd,
 And deem'd that fallen worship far more dear,
 Perhaps because 't was fallen: her sires were proud
 Of deeds and days when they had fill'd the ear
 Of nations, and had never bent or bow'd
 To novel power; and as she was the last,
 She held their old faith and old feelings fast.

XLVII.

She gazed upon a world she scarcely knew,
 As seeking not to know it; silent, lone,
 As grows a flower, thus quietly she grew,
 And kept her heart serene within its zone.
 There was awe in the homage which she drew;
 Her spirit seem'd as seated on a throne
 Apart from the surrounding world, and strong
 In its own strength—most strange in one so young.

XLVIII.

Now it so happen'd, in the catalogue
 Of Adeline, Aurora was omitted,
 Although her birth and wealth had given her vogue
 Beyond the charmers we've already cited:
 Her beauty also seem'd to form no clog
 Against her being mention'd as well fitted,
 By many virtues, to be worth the trouble
 Of single gentlemen who would be double.

XLIX.

And this omission, like that of the bust
 Of Brutus at the pageant of Tiberius,
 Made Juan wonder, as no doubt he must.
 This he express'd half smiling and half serious;
 When Adeline replied, with some disgust,
 And with an air, to say the least, imperious,
 She marvell'd "what he saw in such a baby
 As that prim, silent, cold Aurora Raby!"

L.

Juan rejoin'd—"She was a catholic,
 And therefore fittest, as of his persuasion;
 Since he was sure his mother would fall sick
 And the Pope thunder excommunication,
 If——" But here Adeline, who seem'd to pique
 Herself extremely on the inoculation
 Of others with her own opinions, stated—
 As usual—the same reason which she late did.

LI.

And wherefore not? A reasonable reason,
 If good, is none the worse for repetition;
 If bad, the best way 's certainly to tease on
 And amplify; you lose much by concision;
 Whereas insisting in or out of season
 Convinces all men, even a politician,
 Or—what is just the same—it wearies out.
 So the end 's gain'd, what signifies the route?

LII.

Why Adeline had this slight prejudice—
 For prejudice it was—against a creature
 As pure as sanctity itself from vice,
 With all the added charm of form and feature,
 For me appears a question far too nice,
 Since Adeline was liberal by nature;
 But nature 's nature, and has more caprices
 Than I have time, or will, to take to pieces.

LIII.

Perhaps she did not like the quiet way
 With which Aurora on those baubles look'd,
 Which charm most people in their earlier day:
 For there are few things by mankind less brook'd,
 And womankind too, if we so may say,
 Than finding thus their genius stand rebuked,
 Like "Anthony's by Cæsar,"⁸ by the few
 Who look upon them as they ought to do.

LIV.

It was not envy—Adeline had none;
 Her place was far beyond it, and her mind.
 It was not scorn—which could not light on one
 Whose greatest *fault* was leaving few to find.
 It was not jealousy, I think: but shun
 Following the "ignes fatui" of mankind.
 It was not—but 't is easier far, alas!
 To say what it was not, than what it was.

LV.

Little Aurora deem'd she was the theme
 Of such discussion. She was there a guest,
 A beauteous ripple of the brilliant stream
 Of rank and youth, though purer than the rest,
 Which flow'd on for a moment in the beam
 Time sheds a moment o'er each sparkling crest.
 Had she known this, she would have calmly smiled—
 She had so much, or little, of the child.

LVI.

The dashing and proud air of Adeline
 Imposed not upon her : she saw her blaze
 Much as she would have seen a glow-worm shine,
 Then turn'd unto the stars for loftier rays.
 Juan was something she could not divine,
 Being no sibyl in the new world's ways;
 Yet she was nothing dazzled by the meteor,
 Because she did not pin her faith on feature.

LVII.

His fame too,—for he had that kind of fame
 Which sometimes plays the deuce with womankind,
 A heterogeneous mass of glorious blame,
 Half virtues and whole vices being combined;
 Faults which attract because they are not tame;
 Follies trick'd out so brightly that they blind :—
 These seals upon her wax made no impression,
 Such was her coldness or her self-possession.

LVIII.

Juan knew nought of such a character—
 High, yet resembling not his lost Haidee;
 Yet each was radiant in her proper sphere :
 The island girl, bred up by the lone sea,
 More warm, as lovely, and not less sincere,
 Was nature's all : Aurora could not be,
 Nor would be thus ;—the difference in them
 Was such as lies between a flower and gem.

LIX.

Having wound up with this sublime comparison,
 Methinks we may proceed upon our narrative,
 And, as my friend Scott says, “I sound my warison ;”
 Scott, the superlative of my comparative—
 Scott, who can paint your Christian knight or Saracen,
 Serf, lord, man, with such skill as none would share it, if
 There had not been one Shakspeare and Voltaire,
 Of one or both of whom he seems the heir.

LX.

I say, in my slight way I may proceed
 To play upon the surface of humanity.
 I write the world, nor care if the world read,
 At least for this I cannot spare its vanity.
 My Muse hath bred, and still perhaps may breed
 More foes by this same scroll: when I began it, I
 Thought that it might turn out so—*now I know it*,
 But still I am, or was, a pretty poet.

LXI.

The conference or congress (for it ended
 As congresses of late do) of the Lady
 Adeline and Don Juan rather blended
 Some acids with the sweets—for she was heady;
 But, ere the matter could be marr'd or mended,
 The silvery bell rung, not for “dinner ready,”
 But for that hour, call'd *half-hour*, given to dress,
 Though ladies' robes seem scant enough for less.

LXII.

Great things were now to be achieved at table,
 With massy plate for armour, knives and forks
 For weapons; but what Muse since Homer's able
 (His feasts are not the worst part of his works)
 To draw up in array a single day-bill
 Of modern dinners? where more mystery lurks
 In soups or sauces, or a sole *ragout*,
 Than witches, b—ches, or physicians, brew.

LXIII.

There was a goodly *soupe à la bonne femme*,
 Though God knows whence it came from; there was too
 A turbot for relief of those who cram,
 Relieved with *dindon à la Périgueux*;
 There also was—the sinner that I am!
 How shall I get this *gourmand* stanza through?
Soupe à la Beauveau, whose relief was dory,
 Relieved itself by pork, for greater glory.

LXIV.

But I must crowd all into one grand mess
 Or mass; for should I stretch into detail,
 My Muse would run much more into excess,
 Than when some squeamish people deem her frail.
 But, though a *bonne vivante*, I must confess
 Her stomach's not her peccant part: this tale
 However doth require some slight refection,
 Just to relieve her spirits from dejection.

LXV

Fowls *à la Condé*, slices eke of salmon,
 With *sauces Genevoises*, and haunch of venison;
 Wines too which might again have slain young Ammon—
 A man like whom I hope we shan't see many soon;
 They also set a glazed Westphalian ham on,
 Whereon Apicius would bestow his benison;
 And then there was champagne with foaming whirls,
 As white as Cleopatra's melted pearls.

LXVI.

Then there was God knows what *à l'Allemande*,
A l'Espagnole, *timballe*, and *salpicon*—
 With things I can't withstand or understand,
 Though swallow'd with much zest upon the whole;
 And *entremets* to piddle with at hand,
 Gently to lull down the subsiding soul;
 While great Lucullus' *robe triomphale* muffles
 (*There 's fame*)—young partridge fillets, deck'd with truffles.¹⁰

LXVII.

What are the *fillets* on the victor's brow
 To these? They are rags or dust. Where is the arch
 Which nodded to the nation's spoils below?
 Where the triumphal chariot's haughty march?
 Gone to where victories must like dinners go.
 Further I shall not follow the research:
 But oh! ye modern heroes with your cartridges,
 When will your names lend lustre e'en to partridges?

LXVIII.

Those truffles too are no bad accessories,
 Follow'd by *petits puits d'amour*,—a dish
 Of which perhaps the cookery rather varies,
 So every one may dress it to his wish,
 According to the best of dictionaries,
 Which encyclopædise both flesh and fish;
 But even *sans confitures*, it no less true is,
 There 's pretty picking in those *petits puits*.¹¹

LXIX.

The mind is lost in mighty contemplation
 Of intellect expended on two courses;
 And indigestion's grand multiplication
 Requires arithmetic beyond my forces.
 Who would suppose, from Adam's simple ration,
 That cookery could have call'd forth such resources,
 As form a science and a nomenclature
 From out the commonest demands of nature?

LXX.

The glasses jingled, and the palates tingled ;
 The diners of celebrity dined well ;
 The ladies with more moderation mingled
 In the feast, pecking less than I can tell ;
 Also the younger men too ; for a springald
 Can't like ripe age in *gourmandise* excel,
 But thinks less of good eating than the whisper
 (When seated next him) of some pretty lisper.

LXXI.

Alas ! I must leave undescribed the *gibier*,
 The *salmi*, the *consommé*, the *purée*,
 All which I use to make my rhymes run glibber
 Than could roast beef in our rough John Bull way :
 I must not introduce even a spare rib here,
 "Bubble and squeak" would spoil my liquid lay ;
 But I have dined, and must forego, alas !
 The chaste description e'en of a *bécasse*.

LXXII.

And fruits, and ice, and all that art refines
 From nature for the service of the *gout*,—
Taste or the *gout*,—pronounce it as inclines
 Your stomach. Ere you dine, the French will do ;
 But *after*, there are sometimes certain signs
 Which prove plain English truer of the two.
 Hast ever *had* the *gout* ? I have not had it—
 But I may have, and you too, reader, dread it.

LXXIII.

The simple olives, best allies of wine,
 Must I pass over in my bill of fare ?
 I must, although a favourite *plat* of mine
 In Spain, and Lucca, Athens, every where :
 On them and bread 't was oft my luck to dine,
 The grass my table-cloth, in open air,
 On Sunium or Hymettus, like Diogenes,
 Of whom half my philosophy the progeny is.

LXXIV.

Amidst this tumult of fish, flesh, and fowl,
 And vegetables, all in masquerade,
 The guests were placed according to their roll,
 But various as the various meats display'd :
 Don Juan sate next an *à l'espagnole*—
 No damsel, but a dish, as hath been said ;
 But so far like a lady, that 't was drest
 Superbly, and contain'd a world of zest.

LXXV.

By some odd chance too he was placed between
 Aurora and the Lady Adeline—
 A situation difficult, I ween,
 For man therein, with eyes and heart, to dine.
 Also the conference which we have seen
 Was not such as to encourage him to shine ;
 For Adeline, addressing few words to him,
 With two transcendent eyes seem'd to look through him.

LXXVI.

I sometimes almost think that eyes have ears :
 This much is sure, that, out of ear-shot, things
 Are somehow echoed to the pretty dears,
 Of which I can't tell whence their knowledge springs ;
 Like that same mystic music of the spheres,
 Which no one hears so loudly though it rings.
 'T is wonderful how oft the sex have heard
 Long dialogues which pass'd without a word !

LXXVII.

Aurora sat with that indifference
 Which piques a *preux chevalier*—as it ought :
 Of all offences that 's the worst offence,
 Which seems to hint you are not worth a thought.
 Now Juan, though no coxcomb in pretence,
 Was not exactly pleased to be so caught ;
 Like a good ship entangled among ice,
 And after so much excellent advice.

LXXVIII.

To his gay nothings, nothing was replied,
 Or something which was nothing, as urbanity
 Required. Aurora scarcely look'd aside,
 Nor even smiled enough for any vanity.
 The devil was in the girl ! Could it be pride,
 Or modesty, or absence, or inanity ?
 Heaven knows ! But Adeline's malicious eyes
 Sparkled with her successful prophecies,

LXXIX.

And look'd as much as if to say, "I said it,"—
 A kind of triumph I 'll not recommend,
 Because it sometimes, as I 've seen or read it,
 Both in the case of lover and of friend,
 Will pique a gentleman, for his own credit,
 To bring what was a jest to a serious end ;
 For all men prophesy what *is* or *was*,
 And hate those who won't let them come to pass.

LXXX.

Juan was drawn thus into some attentions,
 Slight but select, and just enough to express,
 To females of perspicuous comprehensions,
 That he would rather make them more than less.
 Aurora at the last (so history mentions,
 Though probably much less a fact than guess)
 So far relax'd her thoughts from their sweet prison,
 As once or twice to smile, if not to listen.

LXXXI.

From answering, she began to question: this
 With her was rare; and Adeline, who as yet
 Thought her predictions went not much amiss,
 Began to dread she 'd thaw to a coquette—
 So very difficult, they say, it is
 To keep extremes from meeting, when once set
 In motion; but she here too much refined—
 Aurora's spirit was not of that kind.

LXXXII.

But Juan had a sort of winning way,
 A proud humility, if such there be,
 Which show'd such deference to what females say,
 As if each charming word were a decree.
 His tact too temper'd him from grave to gay,
 And taught him when to be reserved or free:
 He had the art of drawing people out,
 Without their seeing what he was about.

LXXXIII.

Aurora, who in her indifference
 Confounded him in common with the crowd
 Of flutterers, though she deem'd he had more sense
 Than whispering foplings, or than witlings loud,—
 Commenced (from such slight things will great commence)
 To feel that flattery which attracts the proud
 Rather by deference than compliment,
 And wins even by a delicate dissent.

LXXXIV.

And then he had good looks;—that point was carried
Nem. con. amongst the women, which I grieve
 To say leads oft to *crim. con.* with the married—
 A case which to the juries we may leave,
 Since with digressions we too long have tarried.
 Now though we know of old that looks deceive,
 And always have done, somehow these good looks
 Make more impression than the best of books.

LXXXV.

Aurora, who look'd more on books than faces,
 Was very young, although so very sage,
 Admiring more Minerva than the Graces,
 Especially upon a printed page.
 But virtue's self, with all her tightest laces,
 Has not the natural stays of strict old age;
 And Socrates, that model of all duty,
 Own'd to a *penchant*, though discreet, for beauty.

LXXXVI.

And girls of sixteen are thus far Socratic,
 But innocently so, as Socrates;
 And really, if the sage sublime and Attic
 At seventy years had phantasies like these,
 Which Plato in his dialogues dramatic
 Has shown, I know not why they should displease
 In virgins—always in a modest way,
 Observe; for that with me 's a “*sine qua*.”

LXXXVII.

Also observe, that like the great Lord Coke
 (See Littleton), whene'er I have express'd
 Opinions two, which at first sight may look
 Twin opposites, the second is the best.
 Perhaps I have a third too in a nook,
 Or none at all—which seems a sorry jest;
 But if a writer should be quite consistent,
 How could he possibly show things existent?

LXXXVIII.

If people contradict themselves, can I
 Help contradicting them, and every body,
 Even my veracious self?—but that 's a lie;
 I never did so, never will—how should I?
 He who doubts all things, nothing can deny;
 Truth's fountains may be clear—her streams are muddy,
 And cut through such canals of contradiction,
 That she must often navigate o'er fiction.

LXXXIX.

Apologue, fable, poesy, and parable,
 Are false, but may be render'd also true
 By those who sow them in a land that 's arable.
 'T is wonderful what fable will not do!
 'T is said it makes reality more bearable:
 But what 's reality? Who has its clue?
 Philosophy? No; she too much rejects.
 Religion? Yes; but which of all her sects?

XC.

Some millions must be wrong, that 's pretty clear ;
 Perhaps it may turn out that all were right.
 God help us ! Since we 've need on our career
 To keep our holy beacons always bright,
 'T is time that some new prophet should appear,
 Or old indulge man with a second sight.
 - Opinions wear out in some thousand years,
 Without a small refreshment from the spheres.

XCI.

But here again, why will I thus entangle
 Myself with metaphysics ? None can hate
 So much as I do any kind of wrangle ;
 And yet such is my folly, or my fate,
 I always knock my head against some angle
 About the present, past, and future state ;
 Yet I wish well to Trojan and to Tyrian,
 For I was bred a moderate presbyterian.

XCII.

But though I am a temperate theologian,
 And also meek as a metaphysician,
 Impartial between Tyrian and Trojan,
 As Eldon on a lunatic commission,—¹⁵
 In politics, my duty is to show John
 Bull something of the lower world's condition.
 It makes my blood boil like the springs of Hecla,
 To see men let these scoundrel sovereigns break law.

XCIII.

But politics, and policy, and piety,
 Are topics which I sometimes introduce,
 Not only for the sake of their variety,
 But as subservient to a moral use ;
 Because my business is to dress society,
 And stuff with *sage* that very verdant goose.
 And now, that we may furnish with some matter all
 Tastes, we are going to try the supernatural.

XCIV.

And now I will give up all argument ;
 And positively henceforth no temptation
 Shall " fool me to the top up of my bent ; "¹⁴
 Yes, I 'll begin a thorough reformation.
 Indeed I never knew what people meant
 By deeming that my Muse's conversation
 Was dangerous,—I think she is as harmless
 As some who labour more and yet may charm less.

XCV.

Grim reader ! did you ever see a ghost ?

No ; but you 've heard—I understand—be dumb !

And don't regret the time you may have lost,

For you have got that pleasure still to come :

And do not think I mean to sneer at most

Of these things, or by ridicule benumb

That source of the sublime and the mysterious :—

For certain reasons my belief is serious.

XCVI.

Serious ? You laugh :—you may ; that will I not ;

My smiles must be sincere or not at all.

I say I do believe a haunted spot

Exists—and where ? That shall I not recal,

Because I 'd rather it should be forgot.

“Shadows the soul of Richard” may appal :¹⁵

In short, upon that subject I 've some qualms very

Like those of the philosopher of Malmsbury.¹⁶

XCVII.

The night (I sing by night—sometimes an owl,

And now and then a nightingale)—is dim,

And the loud shriek of sage Minerva's fowl

Rattles around me her discordant hymn :

Old portraits from old walls upon me scowl—

I wish to heaven they would not look so grim ;

The dying embers dwindle in the grate—

I think too that I have sate up too late :

XCVIII.

And therefore, though 't is by no means my way

To rhyme at noon—when I have other things

To think of, if I ever think,—I say

I feel some chilly midnight shudderings,

And prudently postpone, until mid-day,

Treating a topic which, alas ! but brings

Shadows ;—but you must be in my condition

Before you learn to call this superstition.

XCIX.

Between two worlds life hovers like a star,

'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge :

How little do we know that which we are !

How less what we may be ! The eternal surge

Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar

Our bubbles ; as the old burst, new emerge,

Lash'd from the foam of ages ; while the graves

Of empires heave but like some passing waves.

NOTES TO CANTO XV.

Note 1. Stanza viii.

Ransom, Kinnaird, and Co. were Lord Byron's bankers.—E.

Note 2. Stanza xvi.

Raphael's masterpiece is called the Transfiguration.—E.

Note 3. Stanza xxi.

As it is necessary in these times to avoid ambiguity, I say, that I mean, by "diviner still," CHRIST. If ever God was Man—or man God—he was *both*. I never arraigned his creed, but the use—or abuse—made of it. Mr. Canning one day quoted christianity to sanction Negro slavery, and Mr. Wilberforce had little to say in reply. And was Christ crucified, that black men might be scourged? If so, he had better been born a Mulatto, to give both colours an equal chance of freedom, or at least salvation.

Note 4. Stanza xxi.

"Thou finely wouldst say all? Say something well:
Say something ill, if thou wouldst bear the bell."—ELPHINSTON.

Note 5. Stanza xxii.

"The cat will mew; the dog will have his day"—*Hamlet*.

Note 6. Stanza xxxv.

This extraordinary and flourishing German colony in America does not entirely exclude matrimony, as the "Shakers" do; but lays such restrictions upon it as prevent more than a certain quantum of births within a certain number of years: which births (as Mr. Hume observed) generally arrive "in a little flock like those of a farmer's lambs, all within the same month perhaps." These Harmonists (so called from the name of their settlement) are represented as a remarkably flourishing, pious, and quiet people. See the various recent writers on America.

Note 7. Stanza xxxviii.

Jacob Tonson, according to Mr. Pope, was accustomed to call his writers, "able pens"—"persons of honour," and especially "eminent hands." Vide Correspondence, &c., &c.

Note 8. Stanza liii.

———"And under him,
My genius is rebuked; as it is said
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar."—*Macbeth*.

Note 9. Stanza lix.

Warison—cri de guerre—note of assault.

"Either receive within these towers
Two hundred of my master's powers,
Or straight they sound their *warison*,
And storm and spoil this garrison."—*Lay of the last Minstrel*.

Note 10. Stanza lxvi.

A dish *à la Lucullus*. This hero, who conquered the East, has left his more extended celebrity to the transplantation of cherries (which he first brought into Europe) and the nomenclature of some very good dishes;—and I am not sure that

(barring indigestion) he has not done more service to mankind by his cookery than by his conquests. A cherry-tree may weigh against a bloody laurel; besides he has contrived to earn celebrity from both.

Note 11. Stanza lxviii.

Petits puits d'amour garnis de confitures, a classical and well-known dish for part of the flank of a second course.

Note 12. Stanza lxxxvi.

Subauditur *Non*, omitted for the sake of euphony.

Note 13. Stanza xcii.

John Scott, Earl of Eldon, Chancellor of England (with the interruption of fourteen months) from 1801 to 1830.—E.

Note 14. Stanza xciv.

See *Hamlet*, act iii, sc. 2.

Note 15. Stanza xcvi.

———"Shadows to-night
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard
Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers," &c.—*Richard III.*

Note 16. Stanza xcvi.

Hobbes; who, doubting of his own soul, paid that compliment to the souls of other people as to decline their visits, of which he had some apprehension.

CANTO XVI.

I.

THE antique Persians taught three useful things,—

To draw the bow, to ride, and speak the truth.

This was the mode of Cyrus—best of kings—

A mode adopted since by modern youth.

Bows have they, generally with two strings;

Horses they ride without remorse or ruth;

At speaking truth perhaps they are less clever,

But draw the long-bow better now than ever.

II.

The cause of this effect, or this defect,—

“For this effect defective comes by cause,”—

Is what I have not leisure to inspect;

But this I must say in my own applause,

Of all the Muses that I recollect,

Whate'er may be her follies or her flaws

In some things, mine's beyond all contradiction

The most sincere that ever dealt in fiction.

III.

And as she treats all things, and ne'er retreats

From any thing, this epic will contain

A wilderness of the most rare conceits,

Which you might elsewhere hope to find in vain.

'T is true there be some bitters with the sweets,

Yet mix'd so slightly that you can't complain,

But wonder they so few are, since my tale is

“De rebus cunctis et quibusdam aliis.”

IV.

But of all truths which she has told, the most

True is that which she is about to tell.

I said it was a story of a ghost—

What then? I only know it so befel.

Have you explored the limits of the coast,

Where all the dwellers of the earth must dwell?

'T is time to strike such puny doubters dumb as

The sceptics who would not believe Columbus.

V.

Some people would impose now with authority,
 Turpin's or Monmouth Geoffry's Chronicle;
 Men whose historical superiority
 Is always greatest at a miracle.
 But Saint Augustine has the great priority,
 Who bids all men believe the impossible,
Because 't is so. Who nibble, scribble, quibble, lie
 Quiets at once with "*quia impossibile.*"

VI.

And therefore, mortals, cavil not at all;
 Believe:—if 't is improbable, you *must*;
 And if it is impossible, you *shall*:
 'T is always best to take things upon trust.
 I do not speak profanely to recal
 Those holier mysteries, which the wise and just
 Receive as gospel, and which grow more rooted,
 As all truths must, the more they are disputed.

VII.

I merely mean to say what Johnson said,
 That in the course of some six thousand years,
 All nations have believed that from the dead
 A visitant at intervals appears;
 And what is strangest upon this strange head,
 Is that whatever bar the reason rears
 'Gainst such belief, there 's something stronger still
 In its behalf, let those deny who will.

VIII.

The dinner and the *soirée* too were done,
 The supper too discuss'd, the dames admired,
 The banqueters had dropp'd off one by one—
 The song was silent, and the dance expired:
 The last thin petticoats were vanish'd, gone,
 Like fleecy clouds into the sky retired,
 And nothing brighter gleam'd through the saloon
 Than dying tapers—and the peeping moon.

IX.

The evaporation of a joyous day
 Is like the last glass of champagne, without
 The foam which made its virgin bumper gay;
 Or like a system coupled with a doubt;
 Or like a soda-bottle when its spray
 Has sparkled and let half its spirit out;
 Or like a billow left by storms behind,
 Without the animation of the wind;

X.

Or like an opiate which brings troubled rest,
 Or none ; or like—like nothing that I know
 Except itself ;—such is the human breast ;
 A thing, of which similitudes can show
 No real likeness,—like the old Tyrian vest
 Dyed purple, none at present can tell how,
 If from a shell-fish or from cochineal.²
 So perish every tyrant's robe piece-meal !

XI.

But next to dressing for a rout or ball,
 Undressing is a woe ; our *robe de chambre*
 May sit like that of Nessus and recal
 Thoughts quite as yellow, but less clear than amber.
 Titus exclaim'd, “ I 've lost a day ! ” Of all
 The nights and days most people can remember
 (I 've had of both, some not to be disdain'd),
 I wish they 'd state how many they have gain'd.

XII.

And Juan, on retiring for the night,
 Felt restless, and perplexed, and compromised ;
 He thought Aurora Raby's eyes more bright
 Than Adeline (such is advice) advised ;
 If he had known exactly his own plight,
 He probably would have philosophised ;
 A great resource to all, and ne'er denied
 Till wanted ; therefore Juan only sigh'd.

XIII.

He sigh'd :—the next resource is the full moon,
 Where all sighs are deposited ; and now
 It happen'd luckily, the chaste orb shone
 As clear as such a climate will allow ;
 And Juan's mind was in the proper tone
 To hail her with the apostrophe—“ Oh, thou ! ”
 Of amatory egotism the tuism,
 Which further to explain would be a truism.

XIV.

But lover, poet, or astronomer,
 Shepherd, or swain, whoever may behold,
 Feel some abstraction when they gaze on her :
 Great thoughts we catch from thence (besides a cold
 Sometimes, unless my feelings rather err) ;
 Deep secrets to her rolling light are told ;
 The ocean's tides and mortals' brains she sways,
 And also hearts, if there be truth in lays.

XV

Juan felt somewhat pensive, and disposed
 For contemplation rather than his pillow ;
 The gothic chamber, where he was enclosed,
 Let in the rippling sound of the lake's billow,
 With all the mystery by midnight caused ;
 Below his window waved (of course) a willow ;
 And he stood gazing out on the cascade,
 That flash'd and after darken'd in the shade.

XVI.

Upon his table or his toilet—which
 Of these is not exactly ascertain'd—
 (I state this, for I'm cautious to a pitch
 Of nicety, where a fact is to be gain'd)
 A lamp burn'd high, while he leant from a niche,
 Where many a gothic ornament remain'd,
 In chisell'd stone and painted glass, and all
 That time has left our fathers of their hall.

XVII.

Then, as the night was clear though cold, he threw
 His chamber-door wide open—and went forth
 Into a gallery, of a sombre hue,
 Long, furnish'd with old pictures of great worth,
 Of knights and dames heroic and chaste too,
 As doubtless should be people of high birth.
 But by dim lights the portraits of the dead
 Have something ghastly, desolate, and dread.

XVIII.

The forms of the grim knights and pictured saints
 Look living in the moon ; and as you turn
 Backward and forward to the echoes faint
 Of your own footsteps—voices from the urn
 Appear to wake, and shadows wild and quaint
 Start from the frames which fence their aspects stern,
 As if to ask how can you dare to keep
 A vigil there, where all but death should sleep.

XIX.

And the pale smile of beauties in the grave,
 The charms of other days, in starlight gleams,
 Glimmer on high ; their buried locks still wave
 Along the canvass ; their eyes glance like dreams
 On ours, or spars within some dusky cave,
 But death is imaged in their shadowy beams.
 A picture is the past ; e'en ere its frame
 Be gilt, who sate hath ceased to be the same.

XX.

As Juan mused on mutability,
 Or on his mistress—terms synonymous—
 No sound except the echo of his sigh
 Or step ran sadly through that antique house,
 When suddenly he heard, or thought so, nigh,
 A supernatural agent—or a mouse,
 Whose little nibbling rustle will embarrass
 Most people, as it plays along the arras.

XXI.

It was no mouse, but lo! a monk, array'd
 In cowl and beads and dusky garb, appear'd,
 Now in the moonlight, and now lapsed in shade,
 With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard;
 His garments only a slight murmur made;
 He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird,
 But slowly; and as he pass'd Juan by,
 Glanced, without pausing, on him a bright eye.

XXII.

Juan was petrified; he had heard a hint
 Of such a spirit in these halls of old,
 But thought, like most men, there was nothing in 't.
 Beyond the rumour which such spots unfold,
 Coin'd from surviving superstition's mint,
 Which passes ghosts in currency like gold,
 But rarely seen, like gold compared with paper.
 And *did* he see this? or was it a vapour?

XXIII.

Once, twice, thrice pass'd, repass'd—the thing of air,
 Or earth beneath, or heaven, or t' other place;
 And Juan gazed upon it with a stare,
 Yet could not speak or move; but, on its base
 As stands a statue, stood: he felt his hair
 Twine like a knot of snakes around his face;
 He tax'd his tongue for words, which were not granted,
 To ask the reverend person what he wanted.

XXIV.

The third time, after a still longer pause,
 The shadow pass'd away—but where? the hall
 Was long, and thus far there was no great cause
 To think his vanishing unnatural:
 Doors there were many, through which, by the laws
 Of physics, bodies, whether short or tall,
 Might come or go; but Juan could not state
 Through which the spectre seem'd to evaporate.

XXV.

He stood, how long he knew not, but it seem'd
 An age—expectant, powerless, with his eyes
 Strain'd on the spot where first the figure gleam'd;
 Then by degrees recall'd his energies,
 And would have pass'd the whole off as a dream,
 But could not wake; he was, he did surmise,
 Walking already, and return'd at length
 Back to his chamber, shorn of half his strength.

XXVI.

All there was as he left it; still his taper
 Burnt, and not *blue*, as modest tapers use,
 Receiving sprites with sympathetic vapour;
 He rubb'd his eyes, and they did not refuse
 Their office; he took up an old newspaper,
 The paper was right easy to peruse;
 He read an article the king attacking,
 And a long eulogy of "patent blacking."

XXVII.

This savour'd of this world; but his hand shook—
 He shut his door, and after having read
 A paragraph, I think about Horne Tooke,
 Undress'd, and rather slowly went to bed.
 There, couch'd all snugly on his pillow's nook,
 With what he 'd seen his phantasy he fed,
 And though it was no opiate, slumber crept
 Upon him by degrees, and so he slept.

XXVIII.

He woke betimes; and, as may be supposed,
 Ponder'd upon his visitant or vision,
 And whether it ought not to be disclosed,
 At risk of being quizzed for superstition.
 The more he thought, the more his mind was posed;
 In the mean time his valet, whose precision
 Was great, because his master brook'd no less,
 Knock'd to inform him it was time to dress.

XXIX.

He dress'd; and, like young people, he was wont
 To take some trouble with his toilet, but
 This morning rather spent less time upon 't;
 Aside his very mirror soon was put;
 His curls fell negligently o'er his front,
 His clothes were not curb'd to their usual cut,
 His very neckcloth's Gordian knot was tied
 Almost a hair's breadth too much on one side.

XXX.

And when he walk'd down into the saloon,
 He sate him pensive o'er a dish of tea,
 Which he perhaps had not discover'd soon,
 Had it not happen'd scalding hot to be,
 Which made him have recourse unto his spoon;
 So much *distract* he was, that all could see
 That something was the matter—Adeline
 The first—but *what* she could not well divine.

XXXI.

She look'd and saw him pale, and turn'd as pale
 Herself; then hastily look'd down and mutter'd
 Something, but what's not stated in my tale.
 Lord Henry said, his muffin was ill butter'd;
 The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke play'd with her veil,
 And look'd at Juan hard, but nothing utter'd.
 Aurora Raby, with her large dark eyes,
 Survey'd him with a kind of calm surprise.

XXXII.

But seeing him all cold and silent still,
 And every body wondering more or less,
 Fair Adeline inquired if he were ill?
 He started, and said, "Yes—no—rather—yes."
 The family physician had great skill,
 And, being present, now began to express
 His readiness to feel his pulse and tell
 The cause; but Juan said, "he was quite well."

XXXIII.

"Quite well; yes—no." These answers were mysterious,
 And yet his looks appear'd to sanction both,
 However they might savour of delirious;
 Something like illness of a sudden growth
 Weigh'd on his spirit, though by no means serious.
 But for the rest, as he himself seem'd loth
 To state the case, it might be ta'en for granted,
 It was not the physician that he wanted.

XXXIV.

Lord Henry, who had now discuss'd his chocolate,
 Also the muffin whereof he complain'd,
 Said, Juan had not got his usual look elate,
 At which he marvell'd, since it had not rain'd;
 Then ask'd her Grace what news were of the Duke of late?
 Her Grace replied, *his* Grace was rather pain'd
 With some slight, light, hereditary twinges
 Of gout, which rusts aristocratic hinges.

XXXV.

Then Henry turn'd to Juan, and address'd
 A few words of condolence on his state :
 " You look," quoth he, " as if you 'd had your rest
 Broke in upon by the Black Friar of late."
 " What friar?" said Juan; and he did his best
 To put the question with an air sedate,
 Or careless; but the effort was not valid
 To hinder him from growing still more pallid.

XXXVI.

" Oh! have you never heard of the Black Friar?
 The spirit of these walls?"—" In truth not I."
 " Why fame—but fame you know 's sometimes a liar—
 Tells an odd story, of which by and by:
 Whether with time the spectre has grown shyer,
 Or that our sires had a more gifted eye
 For such sights, though the tale is half believed,
 The friar of late has not been oft perceived.

XXXVII.

" The last time was—"—" I pray," said Adeline—
 (Who watch'd the changes of Don Juan's brow,
 And from its context thought she could divine
 Connexions stronger than he chose to avow
 With this same legend)—" if you but design
 To jest, you 'll chuse some other theme just now,
 Because the present tale has oft been told,
 And is not much improved by growing old."

XXXVIII.

" Jest!" quoth my lord, " Why, Adeline, you know
 That we ourselves—'t was in the honey-moon-
 Saw—"—" Well, no matter, 't was so long ago;
 But come, I 'll set your story to a tune."
 Graceful as Dian when she draws her bow,
 She seized her harp, whose strings were kindled soon
 As touch'd, and plaintively began to play
 The air of "'T was a Friar of Orders Gray."

XXXIX.

" But add the words," cried Henry, " which you made,
 For Adeline is half a poetess,"
 Turning round to the rest, he smiling said.
 Of course the others could not but express
 In courtesy their wish to see display'd
 By one *three* talents, for there were no less—
 The voice, the words, the harper's skill, at once
 Could hardly be united by a dunce.

XL.

After some fascinating hesitation—

The charming of these charmers, who seem bound,
I can't tell why, to this dissimulation,—

Fair Adeline, with eyes fix'd on the ground
At first, then kindling into animation,

Added her sweet voice to the lyric sound,

And sang with much simplicity,—a merit

Not the less precious, that we seldom hear it.

1.

Beware ! beware ! of the Black Friar,

Who sitteth by Norman stone,

For he mutters his prayer in the midnight air,

And his mass of the days that are gone.

When the Lord of the Hill, Amundeville,

Made Norman Church his prey,

And expell'd the friars, one friar still

Would not be driven away.

2.

Though he came in his might, with King Henry's right,

To turn church lands to lay,

With sword in hand, and torch to light

Their walls, if they said nay,

A monk remain'd, unchased, unchain'd,

And he did not seem form'd of clay,

For he 's seen in the porch, and he 's seen in the church,

Though he is not seen by day.

3.

And whether for good, or whether for ill,

It is not mine to say ;

But still to the house of Amundeville,

He abideth night and day.

By the marriage bed of their lords, 't is said,

He flits on the bridal eve ;

And 't is held as faith, to their bed of death

He comes—but not to grieve.

4.

When an heir is born, he 's heard to mourn,

And when aught is to befall

That ancient line, in the pale moon-shine

He walks from hall to hall.

His form you may trace, but not his face,

'T is shadow'd by his cowl ;

But his eyes may be seen from the folds between,

And they seem of a parted soul.

5.

But beware ! beware ! of the Black Friar,
 He still retains his sway,
 For he is yet the church's heir,
 Whoever may be the lay.
 Amundeville is lord by day,
 But the monk is lord by night ;
 Nor wine nor wassail could raise a vassal
 To question that friar's right.

6.

Say nought to him as he walks the hall,
 And he 'll say nought to you ;
 He sweeps along in his dusky pall,
 As o'er the grass the dew.
 Then gramercy ! for the Black Friar ;
 Heaven sain him ! fair or foul,
 And whatsoe'er may be his prayer,
 Let ours be for his soul.

XLI.

The lady's voice ceased, and the thrilling wires
 Died from the touch that kindled them to sound ;
 And the pause follow'd, which, when song expires,
 Pervades a moment those who listen round ;
 And then of course the circle much admires,
 Nor less applauds, as in politeness bound,
 The tones, the feeling, and the execution,
 To the performer's diffident confusion.

XLII.

Fair Adeline, though in a careless way,
 As if she rated such accomplishment
 As the mere pastime of an idle day,
 Pursued an instant for her own content,
 Would now and then as 't were *without* display,
 Yet *with* display in fact, at times relent
 To such performances with haughty smile,
 To show she *could*, if it were worth her while.

XLIII.

Now this (but we will whisper it aside)
 Was—pardon the pedantic illustration—
 Trampling on Plato's pride with greater pride,
 As did the Cynic on some like occasion ;
 Deeming the sage would be much mortified,
 Or thrown into a philosophic passion,
 For a spoil'd carpet—but the "Attic Bee"
 Was much consoled by his own repartee.⁴

XLIV.

Thus Adeline would throw into the shade
 (By doing easily whene'er she chose,
 What dilettanti do with vast parade),
 Their sort of *half profession*; for it grows
 To something like this when too oft display'd,
 And that it is so, every body knows
 Who 've heard Miss That or This, or Lady T' other,
 Show off—to please their company or mother.

XLV.

Oh! the long evenings of duets and trios!
 The admirations and the speculations;
 The "Mamma Mias!" and the "Amor Mios!"
 The "Tanti Palpitis" on such occasions:
 The "Lasciamis," and quavering "Addios!"
 Amongst our own most musical of nations;
 With "Tu mi chamases" from Portingale,
 To soothe our ears, lest Italy should fail.⁵

XLVI.

In Babylon's bravuras—as the home
 Heart-ballads of Green Erin or Grey Highlands,
 That bring Lochaber back to eyes that roam
 O'er far Atlantic continents or islands,
 The calentures of music which o'ercome
 All mountaineers with dreams that they are nigh lands,
 No more to be beheld but in such visions,—
 Was Adeline well versed, as compositions.

XLVII.

She also had a twilight tinge of *Blue*,
 Could write rhymes, and compose more than she wrote
 Made epigrams occasionally too
 Upon her friends, as every body ought.
 But still from that sublimer azure hue,
 So much the present dye, she was remote;
 Was weak enough to deem Pope a great poet,
 And, what was worse, was not ashamed to show it.

XLVIII.

Aurora—since we are touching upon taste,
 Which now-a-days is the thermometer
 By whose degrees all characters are class'd—
 Was more Shakspearian, if I do not err.
 The worlds beyond this world's perplexing waste
 Had more of her existence, for in her
 There was a depth of feeling to embrace
 Thoughts, boundless, deep, but silent too as space.

XLIX.

Not so her gracious, graceful, graceless grace,
 The full-grown Hebe of Fitz-Fulke, whose mind,
 If she had any, was upon her face,
 And that was of a fascinating kind.
 A little turn for mischief you might trace
 Also thereon,—but that's not much; we find
 Few females without some such gentle leaven,
 For fear we should suppose us quite in heaven.

L.

I have not heard she was at all poetic,
 Though once she was seen reading the "Bath Guide,"
 And "Hayley's Triumphs," which she deem'd pathetic,
 Because, she said, *her temper* had been tried
 So much, the bard had really been prophetic
 Of what she had gone through with,—since a bride.
 But of all verse, what most insured her praise
 Were sonnets to herself, or *bouts rimés*.

LI.

'T were difficult to say what was the object
 Of Adeline, in bringing this same lay
 To bear on what appear'd to her the subject
 Of Juan's nervous feelings on that day.
 Perhaps she merely had the simple project
 To laugh him out of his supposed dismay;
 Perhaps she might wish to confirm him in it,
 Though why I cannot say—at least this minute.

LII.

But so far the immediate effect
 Was to restore him to his self-propriety,
 A thing quite necessary to the elect,
 Who wish to take the tone of their society:
 In which you cannot be too circumspect,
 Whether the mode be *persiflage* or piety,
 But wear the newest mantle of hypocrisy,
 On pain of much displeasing the gynocracy.

LIII.

And therefore Juan now began to rally
 His spirits, and, without more explanation,
 To jest upon such themes in many a sally.
 Her grace too also seized the same occasion,
 With various similar remarks to tally,
 But wish'd for a still more detail'd narration
 Of this same mystic friar's curious doings,
 About the present family's deaths and wooings.

LIV.

Of these few could say more than has been said ;
 They pass'd, as such things do, for superstition
 With some, while others, who had more in dread
 The theme, half credited the strange tradition ;
 And much was talk'd on all sides on that head ;
 But Juan, when cross-question'd on the vision,
 Which some supposed (though he had not avow'd it)
 Had stirr'd him, answer'd in a way to cloud it.

LV.

And then, the mid-day having worn to one,
 The company prepared to separate ;
 Some to their several pastimes, or to none ;
 Some wondering 't was so early, some so late.
 There was a goodly match, too, to be run
 Between some greyhounds on my lord's estate,
 And a young race-horse of old pedigree,
 Match'd for the spring, whom several went to see.

LVI.

There was a picture-dealer who had brought
 A special Titian, warranted original,
 So precious that it was not be bought,
 Though princes the possessor were besieging all.
 The king himself had cheapen'd it, but thought
 The civil list (he deigns to accept, obliging all
 His subjects by his gracious acceptation)
 Too scanty, in these times of low taxation.

LVII.

But as Lord Henry was a connoisseur,—
 The friend of artists, if not arts,—the owner,
 With motives the most classical and pure,
 So that he would have been the very donor,
 Rather than seller, had his wants been fewer,
 So much he deem'd his patronage an honour,
 Had brought the *capo d'opera*, not for sale,
 But for his judgment,—never known to fail.

LVIII.

There was a modern Goth, I mean a gothic
 Bricklayer of Babel, call'd an architect,
 Brought to survey these gray walls, which, though so thick,
 Might have from time acquired some slight defect ;
 Who, after rummaging the abbey through thick
 And thin, produced a plan, whereby to erect
 New buildings of correctest conformation,
 And throw down old, which he call'd *restoration*.

LIX.

The cost would be a trifle—an “old song,”
 Set to some thousands (’t is the usual burthen
 Of that same tune, when people hum it long)—
 The price would speedily repay its worth in
 An edifice no less sublime than strong,
 By which Lord Henry’s good taste would go forth in
 Its glory, through all ages shining sunny,
 For gothic daring shown in English money. 6

LX.

There were two lawyers busy on a mortgage
 Lord Henry wish’d to raise for a new purchase;
 Also a lawsuit upon tenures burgage,
 And one on tithes which sure are Discord’s torches,
 Kindling Religion till she throws down *her* gage,
 “Untying” squires “to fight against the churches;”
 There was a prize ox, a prize pig, and ploughman,
 For Henry was a sort of Sabine showman.

LXI.

There were two poachers caught in a steel trap,
 Ready for jail, their place of convalescence;
 There was a country girl in a close cap
 And scarlet cloak (I hate the sight to see, since—
 Since—since—in youth I had the sad mishap—
 But luckily I’ve paid few parish fees since)
 That scarlet cloak, alas! unclosed with rigour,
 Presents the problem of a double figure.

LXII.

A reel within a bottle is a mystery,
 One can’t tell how it e’er got in or out,
 Therefore the present piece of natural history
 I leave to those who are fond of solving doubt,
 And merely state, though not for the consistory,
 Lord Henry was a justice, and that Scout
 The constable, beneath a warrant’s banner,
 Had bagg’d this poacher upon Nature’s manor.

LXIII.

Now justices of peace must judge all pieces
 Of mischief of all kinds, and keep the game
 And morals of the country from caprices
 Of those who’ve not a licence for the same;
 And of all things, excepting tithes and leases,
 Perhaps these are most difficult to tame:
 Preserving partridges and pretty wenches
 Are puzzles to the most precautions benches.

LXIV.

The present culprit was extremely pale,
 Pale as if painted so; her cheek being red
 By nature, as in higher dames less hale
 'T is white, at least when they just rise from bed.
 Perhaps she was ashamed of seeming frail,
 Poor soul! for she was country born and bred,
 And knew no better in her immorality
 Than to wax white—for blushes are for quality.

LXV.

Her black, bright, downcast, yet *espiègle* eye
 Had gather'd a large tear into its corner,
 Which the poor thing at times essay'd to dry,
 For she was not a sentimental mourner,
 Parading all her sensibility,
 Nor insolent enough to scorn the scorner,
 But stood in trembling, patient tribulation,
 To be call'd up for her examination.

LXVI.

Of course these groups were scatter'd here and there,
 Not nigh the gay saloon of ladies gent.
 The lawyers in the study; and in air
 The prize pig, ploughman, poachers; the men sent
 From town, viz. architect and dealer, were
 Both busy (as a general in his tent
 Writing dispatches) in their several stations,
 Exulting in their brilliant lucubrations.

LXVII.

But this poor girl was left in the great hall,
 While Scout, the parish guardian of the frail,
 Discuss'd (he hated beer yclept the "small")
 A mighty mug of *moral* double ale:
 She waited until Justice could recal
 Its kind attentions to their proper pale,
 To name a thing in nomenclature rather
 Perplexing for most virgins—a child's father.

LXVIII.

You see here was enough of occupation
 For the Lord Henry, link'd with dogs and horses.
 There was much bustle too and preparation
 Below stairs on the score of second courses,
 Because, as suits their rank and situation,
 Those who in counties have great land resources,
 Have "public days," when all men may carouse,
 Though not exactly what's called "open house."

LXIX.

But once a week or fortnight, *uninvited*
 (Thus we translate a *general invitation*),
 All country gentlemen, esquired or knighted,
 May drop in without cards, and take their station
 At the full board, and sit alike delighted
 With fashionable wines and conversation;
 And, as the isthmus of the grand connexion,
 Talk o'er themselves, the past and next election.

LXX.

Lord Henry was a great electioneerer,
 Burrowing for boroughs like a rat or rabbit;
 But county contests cost him rather dearer,
 Because the neighbouring Scotch Earl of Giftgabbit
 Had English influence in the self-same sphere here;
 His son, the Honourable Dick Dicedrabbitt
 Was member for "the other interest" (meaning
 The self-same interest, with a different leaning).

LXXI.

Courteous and cautious therefore in his county,
 He was all things to all men, and dispensed
 To some civility, to others bounty,
 And promises to all—which last commenced
 To gather to a somewhat large amount, he
 Not calculating how much they condensed;
 But, what with keeping some and breaking others,
 His word had the same value as another's.

LXXII.

A friend to freedom and freeholders—yet
 No less a friend to government—he held
 That he exactly the just medium hit
 'Twixt place and patriotism—albeit compell'd,
 Such was his sovereign's pleasure (though unfit,
 He added modestly, when rebels rail'd),
 To hold some sinecures he wish'd abolish'd,
 But that with them all law would be demolish'd.

LXXIII.

He was "free to confess"—(whence comes this phrase?
 Is 't English? No—'t is only parliamentary)
 That innovation's spirit now-a-days
 Had made more progress than for the last century.
 He would not tread a factious path to praise,
 Though for the public weal disposed to venture high;
 As for his place, he could but say this of it,
 That the fatigue was greater than the profit.

LXXIV.

Heaven and his friends knew that a private life
 Had ever been his sole and whole ambition ;
 But could he quit his king in times of strife
 Which threaten'd the whole country with perdition ?
 When demagogues would with a butcher's knife
 Cut through and through (oh ! damnable incision !)
 The Gordian or Geordian knot, whose strings
 Have tied together Commons, Lords, and Kings.

LXXV.

Sooner " come place into the civil list,
 And champion him to the utmost"⁸—he would keep it,
 Till duly disappointed or dismiss'd :
 Profit he cared not for, let others reap it ;
 But should the day come when place ceased to exist,
 The country would have far more cause to weep it ;
 For how could it go on ? Explain who can !
 He gloried in the name of Englishman.

LXXVI.

He was as independent—ay, much more—
 Than those who were not paid for independence,
 As common soldiers, or a common—hore,
 Have in their several arts or parts ascendance
 O'er the irregulars in lust or gore,
 Who do not give professional attendance.
 Thus on the mob all statesmen are as eager
 To prove their pride, as footmen to a beggar.

LXXVII.

All this (save the last stanza) Henry said,
 And thought. I say no more—I 've said too much ;
 For all of us have either heard or read
 Of—or *upon* the hustings—some slight such
 Hints from the independent heart or head
 Of the official candidate. I 'll touch
 No more on this—the dinner-bell hath rung,
 And grace is said ; the grace I *should* have sung—

LXXVIII.

But I 'm too late, and therefore must make play.
 'T was a great banquet, such as Albion old
 Was wont to boast—as if a glutton's tray
 Were something very glorious to behold.
 But 't was a public feast and public day,—
 Quite full, right dull, guests hot, and dishes cold,
 Great plenty, much formality, small cheer,
 And every body out of their own sphere.

LXXIX.

The squires familiarly formal, and
 My lords and ladies proudly condescending ;
 The very servants, puzzling how to hand
 Their plates—without it might be too much bending
 From their high places by the sideboard's stand—
 Yet, like their masters, fearful of offending.
 For any deviation from the graces
 Might cost both man and master too—their *places*.

LXXX.

There were some hunters bold, and coursers keen,
 Whose hounds ne'er err'd, nor greyhounds deign'd to lurch ;
 Some deadly shots too, Septembrisers, seen
 Earliest to rise, and last to quit the search
 Of the poor partridge through his stubble screen.
 There were some massy members of the church,
 Takers of tithes, and makers of good matches,
 And several who sung fewer psalms than catches.

LXXXI.

There were some country wags too,—and alas !
 Some exiles from the town, who had been driven
 To gaze, instead of pavement, upon grass,
 And rise at nine in lieu of long eleven.
 And lo ! upon that day it came to pass,
 I sate next that o'erwhelming son of Heaven,
 The very powerful parson, Peter Pith,⁹
 The loudest wit I e'er was deafen'd with.

LXXXII.

I knew him in his livelier London days,
 A brilliant diner out, though but a curate ;
 And not a joke he cut but earn'd its praise,
 Until preferment, coming at a sure rate,
 (Oh, Providence ! how wondrous are thy ways,
 Who would suppose thy gifts sometimes obdurate ?)
 Gave him, to lay the devil who looks o'er Lincoln,
 A fat fen vicarage, and nought to think on.

LXXXIII.

His jokes were sermons, and his sermons jokes ;
 But both were thrown away amongst the fens ;
 For wit hath no great friend in aguish folks.
 No longer ready ears and short-hand pens
 Imbided the gay *bon mot*, or happy hoax :
 The poor priest was reduced to common sense,
 Or to coarse efforts very loud and long,
 To hammer a hoarse laugh from the thick throng.

LXXXIV.

“There is a difference,” says the song, “between
 A beggar and a queen,” or *was* (of late
 The latter worse used of the two we’ve seen—
 But we’ll say nothing of affairs of state)—
 A difference “’twixt a bishop and a dean,”
 A difference between crockery-ware and plate,
 As between English beef and Spartan broth—
 And yet great heroes have been bred by both.

LXXXV.

But of all nature’s discrepancies, none
 Upon the whole is greater than the difference
 Beheld between the country and the town,
 Of which the latter merits every preference
 From those who’ve few resources of their own,
 And only think, or act, or feel with reference
 To some small plan of interest or ambition—
 Both which are limited to no condition.

LXXXVI.

But *en avant!* The light loves languish o’er
 Long banquets and too many guests, although
 A slight repast makes people love much more,
 Bacchus and Ceres being, as we know,
 Even from our grammar upwards, friends of yore
 With vivifying Venus, who doth owe
 To these the invention of champagne and truffles:
 Temperance delights her, but long fasting ruffles.

LXXXVII.

Dully pass’d o’er the dinner of the day;
 And Juan took his place he knew not where,
 Confused, in the confusion, and *distract*,
 And sitting as if nail’d upon his chair;
 Though knives and forks clang’d round as in a fray,
 He seem’d unconscious of all passing there,
 Till some one, with a groan, express’d a wish
 (Unheeded twice) to have a fin of fish.

LXXXVIII.

On which, at the *third* asking of the bans,
 He started; and, perceiving smiles around
 Broadening to grins, he colour’d more than once,
 And hastily—as nothing can confound
 A wise man more than laughter from a dunce—
 Inflicted on the dish a deadly wound,
 And with such hurry that, ere he could curb it,
 He’d paid his neighbour’s prayer with half a turbot.

LXXXIX.

This was no bad mistake, as it occur'd,
 The supPLICator being an amateur ;
 But others, who were left with scarce a third,
 Were angry—as they well might, to be sure.
 They wonder'd how a young man so absurd
 Lord Henry at his table should endure ;
 And this, and his not knowing how much oats
 Had fallen last market, cost his host three votes.

XC.

They little knew, or might have sympathized,
 That he the night before had seen a ghost ;
 A prologue which but slightly harmonised
 With the substantial company engross'd
 By matter, and so much materialised,
 That one scarce knew at what to marvel most
 Of two things—how (the question rather odd is)
 Such bodies could have souls, or souls such bodies.

XCI.

But what confused him more than smile or stare
 From all the 'squires and 'squiresses around,
 Who wonder'd at the abstraction of his air,
 Especially as he had been renown'd
 For some vivacity among the fair,
 Even in the country circle's narrow bound—
 (For little things upon my lord's estate
 Were good small talk for others still less great)—

XCII.

Was, that he caught Aurora's eye on his,
 And something like a smile upon her check.
 Now this he really rather tock amiss :
 In those who rarely smile, their smile bespeaks
 A strong external motive ; and in this
 Smile of Aurora's there was nought to pique
 Or hope, or love, with any of the wiles
 Which some pretend to trace in ladies' smiles.

XCIII.

'T was a mere quiet smile of contemplation,
 Indicative of some surprise and pity ;
 And Juan grew carnation with vexation,
 Which was not very wise and still less witty,
 Since he had gain'd at least her observation,
 A most important outwork of the city—
 As Juan should have known, had not his senses
 By last night's ghost been driven from their defences.

XCIV.

But, what was bad, she did not blush in turn,
 Nor seem embarrass'd—quite the contrary;
 Her aspect was, as usual, still—not stern—
 And she withdrew, but cast not down, her eye,
 Yet grew a little pale—with what? concern?
 I know not; but her colour ne'er was high—
 Though sometimes faintly flush'd—and always clear
 As deep seas in a sunny atmosphere.

XCV.

But Adeline was occupied by fame
 This day; and watching, witching, condescending
 To the consumers of fish, fowl, and game,
 And dignity with courtesy so blending,
 As all must blend whose part it is to aim
 (Especially as the sixth year is ending)
 At their lord's, son's, and similar connexion's
 Safe conduct through the rocks of re-elections.

XCVI.

Though this was most expedient on the whole,
 And usual, Juan—when he cast a glance
 On Adeline while playing her grand rôle,
 Which she went through as though it were a dance
 (Betraying only now and then her soul
 By a look scarce perceptibly askance
 Of weariness or scorn)—began to feel
 Some doubt how much of Adeline was *real*;

XCVII.

So well she acted all and every part
 By turns—with that vivacious versatility,
 Which many people take for want of heart.
 They err—'t is merely what is call'd mobility,¹⁰
 A thing of temperament and not of art,
 Though seeming so, from its supposed facility;
 And false—though true; for surely they 're sincerest,
 Who 're strongly acted on by what is nearest.

XCVIII.

This makes your actors, artists, and romancers,
 Heroes sometimes, though seldom—sages never;
 But speakers, bards, diplomatists, and dancers,
 Little that 's great, but much of what is clever;
 Most orators, but very few financiers,
 Though all Exchequer Chancellors endeavour,
 Of late years, to dispense with Cocker's rigours,
 And grow quite figurative with their figures.

XCIX.

The poets of arithmetic are they
 Who, though they prove not two and two to be
 Five, as they would do in a modest way,
 Have plainly made it out that four are three,
 Judging by what they take and what they pay.
 The Sinking Fund's unfathomable sea,
 That most unliquidating liquid, leaves
 The debt unsunk, yet sinks all it receives.

C.

While Adeline dispensed her airs and graces,
 The fair Fitz-Fulke seem'd very much at ease ;
 Though too well-bred to quiz men to their faces,
 Her laughing blue eyes with a glance could seize
 The ridicules of people in all places—
 That honey of your fashionable bees—
 And store it up for mischievous enjoyment ;
 And this at present was her kind employment.

CI.

However, the day closed, as days must close ;
 The evening also waned—and coffee came.
 Each carriage was announced, and ladies rose,
 And curtseying off, as curtsies country dame,
 Retired : with most unfashionable bows
 Their docile esquires also did the same,
 Delighted with the dinner and their host,
 But with the Lady Adeline the most.

CII.

Some praised her beauty ; others her great grace ;
 The warmth of her politeness, whose sincerity
 Was obvious in each feature of her face,
 Whose traits were radiant with the rays of verity.
 Yes, *she* was truly worthy *her* high place !
 No one could envy her deserved prosperity ;
 And then her dress—what beautiful simplicity
 Draperied her form with curious felicity ! "

CIII.

Meanwhile sweet Adeline deserved their praises,
 By an impartial indemnification
 For all her past exertion and soft phrases,
 In a most edifying conversation,
 Which turn'd upon their late guests' miens and faces,
 And families, even to the last relation ;
 Their hideous wives, their horrid selves and dresses,
 And truculent distortion of their tresses.

CIV.

True, *she* said little—'t was the rest that broke
 Forth into universal epigram ;
 But then 't was to the purpose what she spoke :
 Like Addison's "faint praise"^{ms} so wont to damn,
 Her own but served to set off every joke,
 As music chimes in with a melodrame.
 How sweet the task to shield an absent friend !
 I ask but this of mine, to—*not* defend.

CV.

There were but two exceptions to this keen
 Skirmish of wits o'er the departed ; one,
 Aurora, with her pure and placid mien ;
 And Juan too, in general behind none
 In gay remark on what he 'd heard or seen,
 Sate silent now, his usual spirits gone :
 In vain he heard the others rail or rally,
 He would not join them in a single sally.

CVI.

'T is true he saw Aurora look as though
 She approved his silence ; she perhaps mistook
 Its motive for that charity we owe,
 But seldom pay the absent, nor would look
 Farther ; it might or it might not be so,
 But Juan, sitting silent in his nook,
 Observing little in his reverie,
 Yet saw this much, which he was glad to see.

CVII.

The ghost at least had done him this much good,
 In making him as silent as a ghost,
 If in the circumstances which ensued
 He gain'd esteem where it was worth the most.
 And certainly Aurora had renew'd
 In him some feelings he had lately lost
 Or harden'd ; feelings which, perhaps ideal,
 Are so divine, that I must deem them real :—

CVIII.

The love of higher things and better days ;
 The unbounded hope, and heavenly ignorance
 Of what is call'd the world, and the world's ways ;
 The moments when we gather from a glance
 More joy than from all future pride or praise,
 Which kindle manhood, but can ne'er entrance
 The heart in an existence of its own,
 Of which another's bosom is the zone.

CIX.

Who would not sigh *Αἰ αἰ τὰν Κυθρηΐαν*
 That *hath* a memory, or that *had* a heart?
 Alas! *her* star must wane like that of Dian,
 Ray fades on ray, as years on years depart.
 Anacreon only had the soul to tie an
 Unwithering myrtle round the unblunted dart
 Of Eros: but, though thou hast play'd us many tricks,
 Still we respect thee, "Alma Venus Genitrix!"¹⁵

CX.

And full of sentiments, sublime as billows
 Heaving between this world and worlds beyond,
 Don Juan, when the midnight hour of pillows
 Arrived, retired to his; but to despond
 Rather than rest. Instead of poppies, willows
 Waved o'er his couch; he meditated, fond
 Of those sweet bitter thoughts which banish sleep,
 And make the worldling sneer, the youngling weep.

CXI.

The night was as before: he was undrest,
 Saving his night-gown, which is an undress;
 Completely *sans culotte*, and without vest;
 In short, he hardly could be clothed with less;
 But, apprehensive of his spectral guest,
 He sate, with feelings awkward to express
 (By those who have not had such visitations),
 Expectant of the ghost's fresh operations.

CXII.

And not in vain he listen'd—Hush! what 's that?
 I see—I see—Ah, no! 't is not—yet 't is—
 Ye powers! it is the—the—the—Pooh! the cat!
 The devil may take that stealthy pace of his!
 So like a spiritual pit-a-pat,
 Or tiptoe of an amatory Miss,
 Gliding the first time to a rendezvous,
 And dreading the chaste echoes of her shoe.

CXIII.

Again what is 't? The wind? No, no,—this time
 It is the sable friar as before,
 With awful footsteps, regular as rhyme,
 Or (as rhymes may be in these days) much more.
 Again, through shadows of the night sublime,
 When deep sleep fell on men, and the world wore
 The starry darkness round her like a girdle
 Splangled with gems—the monk made his blood curdle.

CXIV.

A noise like to wet fingers drawn on glass,¹⁴
 Which sets the teeth on edge ; and a slight clatter
 Like showers which on the midnight gusts will pass,
 Sounding like very supernatural water,—
 Came over Juan's ear, which throb'd, alas !
 For immaterialism 's a serious matter :
 So that even those whose faith is the most great
 In souls immortal, shun them *tête-à-tête*.

CXV.

Were his eyes open?—Yes! and his mouth too.
 Surprise has this effect—to make one dumb,
 Yet leave the gate which eloquence slips through
 As wide as if a long speech were to come.
 Nigh and more nigh the awful echoes drew,
 Tremendous to a mortal tympanum :
 His eyes were open, and (as was before
 Stated) his mouth. What open'd next?—the door.

CXVI.

It open'd with a most infernal creak,
 Like that of hell. “*Lasciate ogni speranza,
 Voi che entrate!*” The hinge seem'd to speak,
 Dreadful as Dante's rima, or this stanza ;
 Or—but all words upon such themes are weak :
 A single shade 's sufficient to entrance a
 Hero—for what is substance to a spirit?
 Or how is 't *matter* trembles to come near it?

CXVII.

The door flew wide, not swiftly—but, as fly
 The sea-gulls, with a steady, sober flight—
 And then swung back ; nor close—but stood awry,
 Half letting in long shadows on the light,
 Which still in Juan's candlesticks burn'd high,
 For he had two, both tolerably bright,—
 And in the door-way, darkening darkness, stood
 The sable friar in his solemn hood.

CXVIII.

Don Juan shook, as erst he had been shaken
 The night before ; but, being sick of shaking,
 He first inclined to think he had been mistaken,
 And then to be ashamed of such mistaking.
 His own internal ghost began to awaken
 Within him, and to quell his corporal quaking—
 Hinting, that soul and body on the whole
 Were odds against a disembodied soul.

CXIX.

And then his dread grew wrath, and his wrath fierce ;
 And he arose, advanced—the shade retreated ;
 But Juan, eager now the truth to pierce,
 Follow'd ; his veins no longer cold, but heated,
 Resolved to thrust the mystery *carte* and *tierce*,
 At whatsoever risk of being defeated :
 The ghost stopp'd, menaced, then retired, until
 He reach'd the ancient wall, then stood stone still.

CXX.

Juan put forth one arm—Eternal Powers !
 It touch'd no soul, nor body, but the wall,
 On which the moonbeams fell in silvery showers,
 Chequer'd with all the tracery of the hall :
 He shudder'd, as no doubt the bravest cowers
 When he can't tell what 't is that doth appal.
 How odd, a single hobgoblin's non-entity
 Should cause more fear than a whole host's identity !^s

CXXI.

But still the shade remain'd ; the blue eyes glared,
 And rather variably for stony death ;
 Yet one thing rather good the grave had spared—
 The ghost had a remarkably sweet breath.
 A straggling curl show'd he had been fair-hair'd ;
 A red lip, with two rows of pearl beneath,
 Gleam'd forth, as through the casement's ivy shroud
 The moon peep'd, just escaped from a gray cloud.

CXXII.

And Juan, puzzled, but still curious, thrust
 His other arm forth—Wonder upon wonder !
 It press'd upon a hard but glowing bust,
 Which beat as if there was a warm heart under.
 He found, as people on most trials must,
 That he had made at first a silly blunder,
 And that in his confusion he had caught
 Only the wall instead of what he sought.

CXXIII.

The ghost, if ghost it were, seem'd a sweet soul,
 As ever lurk'd beneath a holy hood :
 A dimpled chin, a neck of ivory, stole
 Forth into something much like flesh and blood ;
 Back fell the sable frock and dreary cowl,
 And they reveal'd (alas ! that e'er they should !)
 In full, voluptuous, but *not o'ergrown* bulk,
 The phantom of her frolic Grace—Fitz-Fulke !

NOTES TO CANTO XVI.

Note 1. Stanza ii.

See *Hamlet*, act ii, sc. 2.

Note 2. Stanza x.

The composition of the old Tyrian purple, whether from a shell-fish, or from cochineal, or from kermes, is still an article of dispute; and even its colour—some say purple, others scarlet: I say nothing.

Note 3. Stanza xxi.

"Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart."—*Macbeth*.

Note 4. Stanza xliii.

I think that it *was* a *carpet* on which Diogenes trod, with—"Thus I trample on the pride of Plato!"—"With greater pride," as the other replied. But as *carpets* are *meant* to be trodden upon, my memory probably misgives me, and it might be a robe, or tapestry, or a table-cloth, or some other expensive and uncynical piece of furniture.

Note 5. Stanza xlv.

I remember that the mayoress of a provincial town, somewhat surfeited with a similar display from foreign parts, did rather indecorously break through the applauses of an intelligent audience—intelligent, I mean, as to music,—for the words, besides being in recondite languages (it was some years before the peace, ere all the world had travelled, and while I was a collegian)—were sorely disguised by the performers;—this mayoress, I say, broke out with, "Rot your Italianos! for my part, I loves a simple ballat!" Rossini will go a good way to bring most people to the same opinion, some day. Who would imagine that he was to be the successor of Mozart? However, I state this with diffidence, as a liege and loyal admirer of Italian music in general, and of much of Rossini's: but we may say, as the connoisseur did of painting, in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, "that the picture would be better painted if the painter had taken more pains."

Note 6. Stanza lix.

"Ausu Romano, ære Veneto" is the inscription (and well inscribed in this instance) on the sea walls between the Adriatic and Venice. The walls were a republican work of the Venetians; the inscription, I believe, imperial, and inscribed by Napoleon the *First*. It is time to continue to him that title—there will be a second by and bye, "Spes altera mundi," if he live; let him not defeat it like his father. But in any case he will be preferable to the Imbeciles. There is a glorious field for him, if he knew how to cultivate it.

Note 7. Stanza lx.

Though ye *untie* the winds and bid them fight
Against the churches.—*Macbeth*.

Note 8. Stanza lxxv.

"Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
And champion me to the utterance."—*Macbeth*.

Note 9. Stanza lxxi.

Query, *Sidney Smith*, author of *Peter Plimley's Letters*?—PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Note 10. Stanza xcvi.

In French "*mobilité*." I am not sure that mobility is English; but it is expressive of a quality which rather belongs to other climates, though it is sometimes seen to a great extent in our own. It may be defined as an excessive susceptibility of immediate impressions—at the same time without *losing* the past; and is, though sometimes apparently useful to the possessor, a most painful and unhappy attribute.

Note 11. Stanza cii.

"*Curiosa felicitas*."—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

Note 12. Stanza civ.

"Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer."—POPE on Addison.

Note 13. Stanza cix.

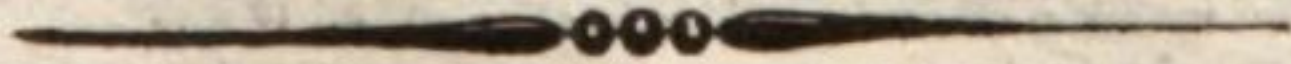
———"Genitrix hominum, divumque voluptas,
Alma Venus."—LUCRET. l. i.

Note 14. Stanza cxiv.

See the account of the ghost of the uncle of Prince Charles of Saxony raised by Schroeffer—"Karl—Karl—was—wolt wolt mich?"

Note 15. Stanza cxx.

———"Shadows to-night,
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard
Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers," &c.
See *Richard III*.



APPENDIX.

THE two first Cantos of Don Juan appeared in London, in July, 1819, without the name of either author or bookseller; but all the world knew that they were Lord Byron's composition, and the periodical press immediately teemed with the "*judicia doctorum—necnon aliorum.*" Among their number, we have selected the two following authorities, the perusal of which cannot fail to gratify our readers, inasmuch as their castigations of Don Juan were considered worthy of very elaborate comment and reclamation on the part of Lord Byron himself.

Of these, the first is that famous article in the no otherwise famous work, since defunct, styled "The British Review," or, in the phrase of Don Juan—

"MY GRANDMOTHER'S REVIEW, THE BRITISH."

"Of a poem so flagitious, that no bookseller has been willing to take upon himself the publication, though most of them disgrace themselves by selling it, what can the critic say? His praise or censure ought to found itself on examples produced from the work itself. For praise, as far as regards the poetry, many passages might be exhibited; for condemnation, as far as regards the morality, all: but, none for either purpose can be produced, without insult to the ear of decency, and vexation to the heart that feels for domestic or national happiness. This poem is sold in the shops as the work of Lord Byron; but the name of neither author nor bookseller is on the title page: we are, therefore, at liberty to suppose it not to be Lord Byron's composition; and this scepticism has something to justify it, in the instance which has lately occurred of the name of that nobleman having been borrowed for a tale of disgusting horror, published under the title of 'The Vampire.'

"But the strongest argument against the supposition of its being the performance of Lord Byron is this;—that it can hardly be possible for an English nobleman, even in his mirth, to send forth to the public the direct and palpable falsehood contained in the 209th and 210th stanzas of the First Canto.

'For fear some prudish readers should grow skittish,
I've bribed my Grandmother's Review—the British.

'I sent it in a letter to the editor,
Who thank'd me duly by return of post—
I'm for a handsome article his creditor;
Yet, if my gentle Muse he please to roast,
And break a promise after having made it her,
Denying the receipt of what it cost,
And smear his page with gall instead of honey,
All I can say is—that he had the money.'

No misdemeanour—not even that of sending into the world obscene and blasphemous poetry, the product of studious lewdness and laboured impiety—appears to us in so detestable a light as the acceptance of *a present* by an editor of a Review, as the condition of praising an author; and yet the miserable man (for miserable he is, as having a soul of which he cannot get rid), who has given birth to this pestilent poem, has not scrupled to lay this to the charge of 'The British Review;' and that not by insinuation, but has actually stated himself to have sent money in a letter to the Editor of this journal, who acknowledged the receipt of the same by a letter in return, with thanks. No peer of the British realm can surely be capable of so calumnious a falsehood, refuted, we trust, by the very character and spirit of the journal so defamed. We are compelled, therefore, to conclude that this poem cannot be Lord Byron's production; and we, of course, expect that Lord Byron will, with all gentlemanly haste, disclaim a work imputed to him, containing a calumny so wholly the product of malignant invention.

"If somebody personating the Editor of the British Review has received money from Lord Byron, or from any other person, by way of bribe to praise his compositions, the fraud might be traced by the production of the letter which the author states himself to have received in return. Surely, then, if the author of this poem has any such letter, he will produce it for this purpose. But lest it should be said that we have not in positive terms denied the charge, we do utterly deny that there is one word of truth, or the semblance of truth, as far as regards

this Review, or its Editor, in the assertions made in the stanzas above referred to. We really feel a sense of degradation, as the idea of this odious imputation passes through our minds.

"We have heard, that the author of the poem under consideration designed what he has said in the 35th stanza as a sketch of his own character:—

'Yet José was an honourable man;
That I must say, who knew him very well.'

If, then, he is this honourable man, we shall not call in vain for an act of justice at his hands, in declaring that he did not mean his word to be taken, when, for the sake of a jest (our readers will judge how far such a mode of jesting is defensible), he stated, with the particularity which belongs to fact, the forgery of a groundless fiction." [No. xviii, 1819.]

The foregoing vindication of the Editor of the British Review, Mr. Roberts, called forth from Lord Byron the following

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF MY GRANDMOTHER'S REVIEW.

MY DEAR ROBERTS,

As a believer in the church of England—to say nothing of the State—I have been an occasional reader and great admirer of, though not a subscriber to, your Review, which is rather expensive. But I do not know that any part of its contents ever gave me much surprise till the eleventh article of your twenty-seventh number made its appearance. You have there most vigorously refuted a calumnious accusation of bribery and corruption, the credence of which in the public mind might not only have damaged your reputation as a clergyman * and an editor, but, what would have been still worse, have injured the circulation of your journal; which, I regret to hear, is not so extensive as the "purity" (as you well observe) "of its, &c. &c." and the present taste for propriety, would induce us to expect. The charge itself is of a solemn nature, and, although in verse, is couched in terms of such circumstantial gravity, as to induce a belief little short of that generally accorded to the thirty-nine articles, to which you so frankly subscribed on taking your degrees. It is a charge the most revolting to the heart of man, from its frequent occurrence; to the mind of a statesman, from its occasional truth; and to the soul of an editor, from its moral impossibility. You are charged then in the last line of one octave stanza, and the whole eight lines of the next, viz. 209th and 210th of the first canto of that "pestilent poem," Don Juan, with receiving, and still more foolishly acknowledging the receipt of, certain monies, to eulogise the unknown author, who by this account must be known to you, if to nobody else. An impeachment of this nature, so seriously made, there is but one way of refuting; and it is my firm persuasion, that whether you did or did not (and I believe that you did not) receive the said monies, of which I wish that he had specified the sum, you are quite right in denying all knowledge of the transaction. If charges of this nefarious

* Mr. Roberts is not, as Lord Byron seems to have supposed, a clergyman, but a barrister at law.

description are to go forth, sanctioned by all the solemnity of circumstance, and guaranteed by the veracity of verse (as Counsellor Phillips * would say), what is to become of readers hitherto implicitly confident in the not less veracious prose of our critical journals? what is to become of the reviews? And, if the reviews fail, what is to become of the editors? It is common cause, and you have done well to sound the alarm. I myself, in my humble sphere, will be one of your echoes. In the words of the tragedian Liston, "I love a row," and you seem justly determined to make one.

It is barely possible, certainly improbable, that the writer might have been in jest; but this only aggravates his crime. A joke, the proverb says, "breaks no bones;" but it may break a bookseller, or it may be the cause of bones being broken. The jest is but a bad one at the best for the author, and might have been a still worse one for you, if your copious contradiction did not certify to all whom it may concern, your own indignant innocence, and the immaculate purity of the *British Review*. I do not doubt your word, my dear Roberts, yet I cannot help wishing that, in a case of such vital importance, it had assumed the more substantial shape of an affidavit sworn before the Lord Mayor Atkins, who readily receives any deposition; and doubtless would have brought it in some way as evidence of the designs of the Reformers to set fire to London, at the same time that he himself meditates the same good office towards the river Thames.

I am sure, my dear Roberts, that you will take these observations of mine in good part; they are written in a spirit of friendship not less pure than your own editorial integrity. I have always admired you; and, not knowing any shape which friendship and admiration can assume more agreeable and useful than that of good advice, I shall continue my lucubrations, mixed with here and there a monitory hint as to what I conceive to be the line you should pursue, in case you should ever again be assailed with bribes, or accused of taking them. By the way, you don't say much about the poem, except that it is "flagitious." This is a pity—you should have cut it up; because, to say the truth, in not doing so, you somewhat assist any notions which the malignant might entertain on the score of the anonymous asseveration which has made you so angry.

You say no bookseller "was willing to take upon himself the publication, though most of them disgrace themselves by selling it." Now, my dear friend, though we all know that those fellows will do any thing for money, methinks the disgrace is more with the purchasers: and some such, doubtless, there are; for there can be no very extensive selling (as you will perceive by that of the *British Review*) without buying. You then add, "What can the critic say?" I am sure I don't know; at present he says very little, and that not much to the purpose. Then comes, "for praise, as far as regards the *poetry*, many passages might be exhibited: for condemnation, as far as regards

* Charles Phillips, Barrister, was in those days celebrated for ultra-Irish eloquence. See the *Edinburgh Review*, No. lvii.—E.

the morality, all." Now, my dear good Mr. Roberts, I feel for you, and for your reputation: my heart bleeds for both; and I do ask you, whether or not such language does not come positively under the description of "the puff collusive," for which see Sheridan's farce of "The Critic" (by the way, a little more facetious than your own farce under the same title), towards the close of scene second, act the first.

The poem is, it seems, sold as the work of Lord Byron; but you feel yourself "at liberty to suppose it not Lord B.'s composition." Why did you ever suppose that it was? I approve of your indignation—I applaud it—I feel as angry as you can; but perhaps your virtuous wrath carries you a little too far, when you say that "no misdemeanour, not even that of sending into the world obscene and blasphemous poetry, the product of studious lewdness and laboured impiety, appears to you in so detestable a light as the acceptance of a present by the editor of a review, as the condition of praising an author." The devil it does n't!—Think a little. This is being critical overmuch. In point of Gentile benevolence or Christian charity, it were surely less criminal to praise for a bribe, than to abuse a fellow-creature for nothing; and as to the assertion of the comparative innocence of blasphemy and obscenity, confronted with an editor's "acceptance of a present," I shall merely observe, that as an Editor you say very well, but, as a Christian divine, I would not recommend you to transpose this sentence into a sermon.

And yet you say, "the miserable man (for miserable he is, as having a soul of which he cannot get rid)"—But here I must pause again, and enquire what is the meaning of this parenthesis? We have heard of people of "little soul," or of "no soul at all," but never till now of "the misery of having a soul of which we cannot get rid;" a misery under which you are possibly no great sufferer, having got rid apparently of some of the intellectual part of your own when you penned this pretty piece of eloquence.

But to continue. You call upon Lord Byron, always supposing him *not* the author, to disclaim "with all gentlemanly haste," &c. &c. I am told that Lord B. is in a foreign country, some thousand miles off it may be; so that it will be difficult for him to hurry to your wishes. In the mean time, perhaps you yourself have set an example of more haste than gentility; but "the more haste the worse speed."

Let us now look at the charge itself, my dear Roberts, which appears to me to be in some degree not quite explicitly worded:

"I bribed my *Grandmother's* Review, the British."

I recollect hearing, soon after the publication, this subject discussed at the tea-table of Mr. Sotheby the poet, who expressed himself, I remember, a good deal surprised that you had never reviewed his epic poem of "Saul," nor any of his six tragedies; of which, in one instance, the bad taste of the pit, and, in all the rest, the barbarous repugnance of the principal actors, prevented the performance. Mrs. and the Misses S. being in a corner of the room, perusing the proof sheets of

Mr. S.'s poems in Italy, or on Italy, as he says (I wish, by the by, Mrs. S. would make the tea a little stronger), the male part of the *conversazione* were at liberty to make a few observations on the poem and passage in question; and there was a difference of opinion. Some thought the allusion was to the "British Critic;"* others, that by the expression, "My Grandmother's Review," it was intimated that "my grandmother" was not the reader of the review, but actually the writer; thereby insinuating, my dear Roberts, that you were an old woman; because, as people often say, "Jeffrey's Review," "Gifford's Review," in lieu of Edinburgh and Quarterly; so "my Grandmother's Review" and Roberts's might be also synonymous. Now, whatever colour this insinuation might derive from the circumstance of your wearing a gown, as well as from your time of life, your general style, and various passages of your writings,—I will take upon myself to exculpate you from all suspicion of the kind, and assert, without calling Mrs. Roberts in testimony, that if ever you should be chosen Pope, you will pass through all the previous ceremonies with as much credit as any pontiff since the parturition of Joan. It is very unfair to judge of sex from writings, particularly from those of the British Review. We are all liable to be deceived; and it is an indisputable fact, that many of the best articles in your journal, which were attributed to a veteran female, were actually written by you yourself; and yet to this day there are people who could never find out the difference. But let us return to the more immediate question.

I agree with you, that it is impossible Lord Byron should be the author, not only because, as a British peer and a British poet, it would be impracticable for him to have recourse to such facetious fiction, but for some other reasons which you have omitted to state. In the first place, his Lordship has no grandmother. Now, the author—and we may believe him in this—doth expressly state that the "British" is his "Grandmother's Review;" and if, as I think I have distinctly proved, this was not a mere figurative allusion to your supposed intellectual age and sex, my dear friend, it follows, whether you be she or no, that there is such an elderly lady still extant. And I can the more readily credit this, having a sexagenary aunt of my own, who perused you constantly, till unfortunately falling asleep over the leading article of your last number, her spectacles fell off and were broken against the fender, after a faithful service of fifteen years, and she has never been able to fit her eyes since; so that I have been forced to read you aloud to her; and this is in fact the way in which I became acquainted with the subject of my present letter, and thus determined to become your public correspondent.

* "Whether it be the British Critic, or the British Review, against which the noble lord prefers so brave a charge, or rather so facetious an accusation, we are at a loss to determine. The latter has thought it worth its while, in a public paper, to make a serious reply. As we are not so seriously inclined, we shall leave our share of this accusation to its fate."—*Brit. Critic*.

In the next place, Lord B.'s destiny seems in some sort like that of Hercules of old, who became the author of all unappropriated prodigies. Lord B. has been supposed the author of the "Vampire," of a "Pilgrimage to Jerusalem," "To the Dead Sea," of "Death upon the Pale Horse," of odes to "La Valette," to "Saint Helena," to the "Land of the Gaul," and to a sucking child. Now, he turned out to have written none of these things. Besides, you say, he knows in what a spirit of, &c. you criticise:—Are you sure he knows all this? that he has read you like my poor dear aunt? They tell me he is a queer sort of a man; and I would not be too sure, if I were you, either of what he has read or of what he has written. I thought his style had been the serious and terrible. As to his sending you money, this is the first time that ever I heard of his paying his reviewers in *that coin*; I thought it was rather in *their own*, to judge from some of his earlier productions. Besides, though he may not be profuse in his expenditure, I should conjecture that his reviewer's bill is not so long as his tailor's.

Shall I give you what I think a prudent opinion? I don't mean to insinuate, God forbid! but if, by any accident, there should have been such a correspondence between you and the unknown author, whoever he may be, send him back his money: I dare say he will be very glad to have it again; it can't be much, considering the value of the article and the circulation of the journal; and you are too modest to rate your praise beyond its real worth.—Don't be angry,—I know you won't—at this appraisal of your powers of eulogy; for on the other hand, my dear friend, depend upon it your abuse is worth, not its own weight,—that's a feather,—but *your* weight in gold. So don't spare it: if he has bargained for *that*, give it handsomely, and depend upon your doing him a friendly office.

But I only speak in case of possibility; for as I said before, I cannot believe, in the first instance, that you would receive a bribe to praise any person whatever; and still less can I believe, that your praise could ever produce such an offer. You are a good creature, my dear Roberts, and a clever fellow; else I could almost suspect that you had fallen into the very trap set for you in verse by this anonymous wag, who will certainly be but too happy to see you saving him the trouble of making you ridiculous. The fact is, that the solemnity of your eleventh article does make you look a little more absurd than you ever yet looked, in all probability, and at the same time, does no good; for if any body believed before in the octave stanzas, they will believe still, and you will find it not less difficult to prove your negative, than the learned Partridge found it to demonstrate his not being dead, to the satisfaction of the readers of almanacs.

What the motives of this writer may have been for (as you magnificently translate his quizzing you) "stating, with the particularity which belongs to fact, the forgery of a groundless fiction" (do, pray, my dear R., talk a little less "in King Cambyzes' vein"), I cannot pretend to say; perhaps to laugh at you, but that is no reason for your benevolently making all the world laugh also. I approve of your being angry; I tell you I am angry too; but you should not have shown it so outrageously.

Your solemn "*if* somebody personating the Editor of the, &c. &c. has received from Lord B. or from any other person," reminds me of Charley Incledon's usual exordium when people came into the tavern to hear him sing without paying their share of the reckoning—"if a maun, or *ony* maun, or *ony other* maun," &c. &c. ; you have both the same redundant eloquence. But why should you think any body would personate you? Nobody would dream of such a prank who ever read your compositions, and perhaps not many who have heard your conversation. But I have been inoculated with a little of your prolixity. The fact is, my dear Roberts, that somebody has tried to make a fool of you, and what he did not succeed in doing, you have done for him and for yourself.

With regard to the poem itself, or the author, whom I cannot find out, (can you?) I have nothing to say ; my business is with you. I am sure that you will, upon second thoughts, be really obliged to me for the intention of this letter, however far short my expressions may have fallen of the sincere good will, admiration, and thorough esteem, with which I am ever, my dear Roberts,

Most truly yours,

WORTLEY CLUTTERBUCK.

Sept. 4th, 1819,
Little Pidlington.

P. S. My letter is too long to revise, and the post is going. I forget whether or not I asked you the meaning of your last words, "the forgery of a groundless fiction." Now, as all forgery is fiction, and all fiction a kind of forgery, is not this tautological? The sentence would have ended more strongly with "forgery;" only, it hath an awful Bank of England sound, and would have ended like an indictment, besides sparing you several words, and conferring some meaning upon the remainder. But this is mere verbal criticism. Good-bye—once more, yours truly,

W. C.

P. S. 2d.—Is it true that the Saints make up the loss of the Review?—It is very handsome in them to be at so great an expense. Twice more, yours,

W. C.

We next solicit the attention of our readers to the following passages from the redoubted organ of Northern Toryism,—

BLACKWOOD.

"In the composition of this work there is unquestionably a more thorough and intense infusion of genius and vice—power and profligacy—than in any poem which had ever before been written in the English or, indeed, in any other modern language. Had the wickedness been less inextricably mingled with the beauty, and the grace, and the strength of a most inimitable and incomprehensible muse, our task would have been easy. Don Juan is by far the most admirable specimen of the mixture of ease, strength, gaiety, and seriousness extant in the whole body of English poetry: the author has devoted his powers to the worst of purposes and passions; and it increases his guilt and our sorrow, that he has devoted them entire.

"The moral strain of the whole poem is pitched in the lowest key. Love—honour—patriotism—religion, are mentioned only to be scoffed at, as if their sole resting-place were, or

ought to be, in the bosoms of fools. It appears, in short, as if this miserable man, having exhausted every species of sensual gratification—having drained the cup of sin even to its bitterest dregs—were resolved to show us that he is no longer a human being, even, in his frailties; but a cool unconcerned fiend, laughing with a detestable glee over the whole of the better and worse elements of which human life is composed—treating well-nigh with equal derision the most pure of virtues, and the most odious of vices—dead alike to the beauty of the one, and the deformity of the other—a mere heartless despiser of that frail but noble humanity, whose type was never exhibited in a shape of more deplorable degradation than in his own contemptuously distinct delineation of himself. To confess to his Maker, and weep over in secret agonies, the wildest and most fantastic transgressions of heart [and mind, is the part of a conscious sinner, in whom sin has not become the sole principle of life and action. But, to lay bare to the eye of man—and of *woman*—all the hidden convulsions of a wicked spirit—and to do all this without one symptom of contrition, remorse, or hesitation, with a calm, careless ferociousness of contented and satisfied depravity—this was an insult which no man of genius had ever before dared to put upon his Creator or his species. Impiously railing against his God—madly and meanly disloyal to his Sovereign and his country,—and brutally outraging all the best feelings of female honour, affection, and confidence,—how small a part of chivalry is that which remains to the descendant of the Byrons—a gloomy vizor, and a deadly weapon!

“Those who are acquainted (as who is not?) with the main incidents in the private life of Lord Byron—and who have not seen this production, will scarcely believe that malignity should have carried him so far, as to make him commence a filthy and impious poem, with an elaborate satire on the character and manners of his wife—from whom, even by his own confession, he has been separated only in consequence of his own cruel and heartless misconduct. It is in vain for Lord Byron to attempt in any way to justify his own behaviour in that affair; and, now that he has so openly and audaciously invited enquiry and reproach, we do not see any good reason why he should not be plainly told so by the general voice of his countrymen. It would not be an easy matter to persuade any Man, who has any knowledge of the nature of Woman, that a female such as Lord Byron [has himself described his wife to be, would rashly, or hastily, or lightly, separate herself, from the love with which she had once been inspired for such a man as he is, or was. Had he not heaped insult upon insult, and scorn upon scorn—had he not forced the iron of his contempt into her very soul—there is no woman of delicacy and virtue, as he *admitted* Lady Byron to be, who would not have hoped all things and suffered all things from one, her love of whom must have been inwoven with so many exalting elements of delicious pride, and more delicious humility. To offend the love of such a woman was wrong—but it might be forgiven; to desert her was unmanly—but he might have returned, and wiped for ever from her eyes the tears of her desertion;—but to injure, and to desert, and then to turn back and wound her widowed privacy with unhallowed strains of cold-blooded mockery—was brutally, fiendishly, inexpiable mean. For impurities there might be some possibility of pardon, were they supposed to spring only from the reckless buoyancy of young blood and fiery passions;—for impiety there might at least be pity, were it visible that the misery of the impious soul equalled its darkness;—but for offences such as this, which cannot proceed either from the madness of sudden impulse, or the bewildered agonies of doubt—but which speak the wilful and determined spite of an unrepenting, unsoftened, smiling, sarcastic, joyous sinner—there can be neither pity nor pardon. Our knowledge that it is committed by one of the most powerful intellects our island ever has produced, lends intensity a thousand fold to the bitterness of our indignation. Every high thought that was ever kindled in our breasts by the muse of Byron—every pure and lofty feeling that ever responded from within us to the sweep of his majestic inspirations—every remembered moment of admiration and enthusiasm, is up in arms against him. We look back with a mixture of wrath and scorn to the delight with which we suffered ourselves to be filled by one who, all the while he was furnishing us with delight, must, we cannot doubt it, have been mocking us with [a cruel mockery—less cruel only, because less peculiar, than that with which he has now turned him from the lurking-place of his selfish and polluted exile, to pour the pitiful chalice of his contumely on the surrendered devotion of a virgin-bosom, and the holy hopes of the mother of his child. It is indeed a sad and an humiliating thing to know, that in the same year there proceeded from the same pen two productions, in all things so different, as the Fourth Canto of *Childe Harold* and this loathsome *Don Juan*.

“We have mentioned one, and, all will admit, the worst instance of the private malignity which has been embodied in so many passages of *Don Juan*; and we are quite sure, the lofty-minded and virtuous *men* whom Lord Byron has debased himself by insulting, will close the volume which contains their own injuries, with no feelings save those of pity for Him that has inflicted them, and for Her who partakes so largely in the same injuries.”—[Aug. 1819.]

On perusing these passages, Lord Byron wrote the following Pamphlet, which was printed at the time, but on consideration suppressed. It is now, for the first time, published in the present volume.

SOME OBSERVATIONS
UPON AN ARTICLE IN BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, No. XXIX.,
AUGUST, 1819.

Why, how now, Hecate! "you look angrily."
Macbeth.

TO
J. D'ISRAELI, ESQ.
THE AMIABLE AND INGENIOUS AUTHOR
OF
"THE CALAMITIES" AND "QUARRELS OF AUTHORS;"
THIS ADDITIONAL QUARREL AND CALAMITY
IS INSCRIBED BY
ONE OF THE NUMBER.

Ravenna, March 15, 1820.

"THE life of a writer" has been said, by Pope, I believe, to be "*a warfare upon earth.*" As far as my own experience has gone, I have nothing to say against the proposition; and, like the rest, having once plunged into this state of hostility, must, however reluctantly, carry it on. An article has appeared in a periodical work, entitled "*Remarks on Don Juan,*" which has been so full of this spirit, on the part of the writer, as to require some observations on mine.

In the first place, I am not aware by what right the writer assumes this work, which is anonymous, to be my production. He will answer, that there is internal evidence; that is to say, that there are passages which appear to be written in my name, or in my manner. But might not this have been done on purpose by another? He will say, why not then deny it? To this I could answer, that of all the things attributed to me within the last five years,—Pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Deaths upon Pale Horses, Odes to the Land of the Gaul, Adieus to England, Songs to Madame La Valette, Odes to St. Helena, Vampires, and what not,—of which, God knows, I never composed nor read a syllable beyond their titles in advertisements,—I never thought it worth while to disavow any, except *one* which came linked with an account of my "*residence in the Isle of Mitylene,*" where I never resided, and appeared to be carrying the amusement of those persons, who think my name can be of any use to them, a little too far.

I should hardly, therefore, if I did not take the trouble to disavow these things published in my name, and yet not mine, go out of my way to deny an anonymous work ; which might appear an act of supererogation. With regard to Don Juan, I neither deny nor admit it to be mine—every body may form their own opinion ; but, if there be any who now, or in the progress of that poem, if it is to be continued, feel, or should feel themselves so aggrieved as to require a more explicit answer, privately and personally, they shall have it.

I have never shrunk from the responsibility of what I have written, and have more than once incurred obloquy by neglecting to disavow what was attributed to my pen without foundation.

The greater part, however, of the “Remarks on Don Juan” contain but little on the work itself, which receives an extraordinary portion of praise as a composition. With the exception of some quotations, and a few incidental remarks, the rest of the article is neither more nor less than a personal attack upon the imputed author. It is not the first in the same publication : for I recollect to have read, some time ago, similar remarks upon “Beppo” (said to have been written by a celebrated northern preacher) ; in which the conclusion drawn was, that “Childe Harold, Byron, and the Count in Beppo, were one and the same person ;” thereby making me turn out to be, as Mrs. Malaprop* says, “*like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once.*” That article was signed “Presbyter Anglicanus ;” which, I presume, being interpreted, means Scotch Presbyterian.† I must here observe,—and it is at once ludicrous and vexatious to be compelled so frequently to repeat the same thing,—that my case, as an author, is peculiarly hard, in being everlastingly taken, or mistaken, for my own protagonist. It is unjust and particular. I never heard that my friend Moore was set down for a fire-worshipper on account of his Guebre ; that Scott was identified with Roderick Dhu, or with Balfour of Burley ; or that, notwithstanding all the magicians in Thalaba, any body has ever taken Mr. Southey for a conjuror ; whereas I have had some difficulty in extricating me even from Manfred, who, as Mr. Southey slyly observes in one of his articles in the Quarterly, “met the devil on the Jungfrau, and bullied him ;” and I answer Mr. Southey, who has apparently, in his poetical life, not been so successful against the great enemy, that, in this, Manfred exactly followed the sacred precept,—“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”—I shall have more to say on the subject of this person—not the devil, but his most humble servant Mr. Southey—before I conclude ; but, for the present, I must return to the article in the Edinburgh Magazine.

In the course of this article, amidst some extraordinary observations, there occur the following words :—“It appears, in short, as if this miserable man, having exhausted *every species* of sensual gratification,—having drained the cup of sin even to its bitterest dregs, were re-

* In Sheridan’s comedy of “The Rivals.”

† See Blackwood, vol. iii. p. 329. Lord B., as it appears from one of his letters, ascribed this paper to the Rev. Dr. Chalmers.—E.

solved to show us that he is no longer a human being even in his frailties,—but a cool, unconcerned fiend, laughing with a detestable glee over the whole of the better and worse elements of which human life is composed.” In another place there appears, “the lurking-place of his selfish and polluted exile.”—“By my troth, these be bitter words!”—With regard to the first sentence, I shall content myself with observing, that it appears to have been composed for Sardapalus, Tiberius, the Regent Duke of Orleans, or Louis XV; and that I have copied it with as much indifference as I would a passage from Suetonius, or from any of the private memoirs of the regency, conceiving it to be amply refuted by the terms in which it is expressed, and to be utterly inapplicable to any private individual. On the words, “lurking-place,” and “selfish and polluted exile,” I have something more to say.—How far the capital city of a government, which survived the vicissitudes of thirteen hundred years, and might still have existed but for the treachery of Buonaparte, and the iniquity of his imitators,—a city, which was the emporium of Europe when London and Edinburgh were dens of barbarians,—may be termed a “lurking-place,” I leave to those who have seen or heard of Venice to decide. How far my exile may have been “polluted,” it is not for me to say, because the word is a wide one, and, with some of its branches, may chance to overshadow the actions of most men; but that it has been “*selfish*” I deny. If, to the extent of my means and my power, and my information of their calamities, to have assisted many miserable beings, reduced by the decay of the place of their birth, and their consequent loss of substance—if to have never rejected an application which appeared founded on truth—if to have expended in this manner sums far out of proportion to my fortune, there and elsewhere, be selfish, then have I been selfish. To have done such things I do not deem much; but it is hard indeed to be compelled to recapitulate them in my own defence, by such accusations as that before me, like a panel before a jury calling testimonies to his character, or a soldier recording his services to obtain his discharge. If the person who has made the charge of “selfishness” wishes to inform himself further on the subject, he may acquire, not what he would wish to find, but what will silence and shame him, by applying to the Consul-General of our nation, resident in the place, who will be in the case either to confirm or deny what I have asserted.

I neither make, nor have ever made, pretensions to sanctity of demeanour, nor regularity of conduct; but my means have been expended principally on my own gratification, neither now nor heretofore, neither in England nor out of it; and it wants but a word from me, if I thought that word decent or necessary, to call forth the most willing witnesses, and at once witnesses and proofs, in England itself, to show that there are those who have derived not the mere temporary relief of a wretched boon, but the means which led them to immediate happiness and ultimate independence, by my want of that very “*selfishness*,” as grossly as falsely now imputed to my conduct.

Had I been a selfish man—had I been a grasping man—had I been,

in the worldly sense of the word, even a *prudent* man,—I should not be where I now am ; I should not have taken the step which was the first that led to the events which have sunk and swoln a gulf between me and mine ; but in this respect the truth will one day be made known : in the mean time, as Durandarte says, in the Cave of Montesinos, “Patience, and shuffle the cards.”

I bitterly feel the ostentation of this statement, the first of the kind I have ever made : I feel the degradation of being compelled to make it ; but I also feel its *truth*, and I trust to feel it on my death-bed, should it be my lot to die there. I am not less sensible of the egotism of all this ; but, alas ! who have made me thus egotistical in my own defence, if not they, who, by perversely persisting in referring fiction to truth, and tracing poetry to life, and regarding characters of imagination as creatures of existence, have made me personally responsible for almost every poetical delineation which fancy, and a particular bias of thought, may have tended to produce ?

The writer continues :—“Those who are acquainted, *as who is not ?* with the *main* incidents of the private life of Lord B.,” &c. Assuredly, whoever may be acquainted with these “main incidents,” the writer of the “Remarks on Don Juan” is not, or he would use a very different language. That which I believe he alludes to as a “main incident,” happened to be a very subordinate one, and the natural and almost inevitable consequence of events and circumstances long prior to the period at which it occurred. It is the last drop which makes the cup run over, and mine was already full. But, to return to this man’s charge : he accuses Lord B. of “an elaborate satire on the character and manners of his wife.” From what parts of Don Juan the writer has inferred this he himself best knows. As far as I recollect of the female characters in that production, there is but one who is depicted in ridiculous colours, or that could be interpreted as a satire upon any body. But here my poetical sins are again visited upon me, supposing that the poem be mine. If I depict a corsair, a misanthrope, a libertine, a chief of insurgents, or an infidel, he is set down to the author ; and if, in a poem by no means ascertained to be my production, there appears a disagreeable, casuistical, and by no means respectable female pedant, it is set down for my wife. Is there any resemblance ? If there be, it is in those who make it : I can see none. In my writings I have rarely described any character under a fictitious name : those of whom I have spoken have had their own—in many cases a stronger satire in itself than any which could be appended to it. But of real circumstances I have availed myself plentifully, both in the serious and the ludicrous—they are to poetry what landscapes are to the painter ; but my *figures* are not portraits. It may even have happened, that I have seized on some events that have occurred under my own observation, or in my own family, as I would paint a view from my grounds, did it harmonise with my picture ; but I never would introduce the likenesses of its living members, unless their features could be made as favourable to themselves as to the effect ; which, in the above instance, would be extremely difficult.

My learned brother proceeds to observe, that "it is in vain for Lord B. to attempt in any way to justify his own behaviour in that affair; and now that he has so *openly* and *audaciously* invited enquiry and reproach, we do not see any good reason why he should not be plainly told so by the voice of his countrymen." How far the "openness" of an anonymous poem, and the "audacity" of an imaginary character, which the writer supposes to be meant for Lady B., may be deemed to merit this formidable denunciation from their "most sweet voices," I neither know nor care; but when he tells me that I cannot "in any way *justify* my own behaviour in that affair," I acquiesce, because no man can "*justify*" himself until he knows of what he is accused; and I have never had—and, God knows, my whole desire has ever been to obtain it—any specific charge, in a tangible shape, submitted to me by the adversary, nor by others, unless the atrocities of public rumour and the mysterious silence of the lady's legal advisers may be deemed such. But is not the writer content with what has been already said and done? Has not "the general voice of his countrymen" long ago pronounced upon the subject—sentence without trial, and condemnation without a charge? Have I not been exiled by ostracism, except that the shells which proscribed me were anonymous? Is the writer ignorant of the public opinion and the public conduct upon that occasion? If he is, I am not: the public will forget both, long before I shall cease to remember either.

The man who is exiled by a faction has the consolation of thinking that he is a martyr; he is upheld by hope and the dignity of his cause, real or imaginary: he who withdraws from the pressure of debt may indulge in the thought that time and prudence will retrieve his circumstances: he who is condemned by the law, has a term to his banishment, or a dream of its abbreviation; or, it may be, the knowledge or the belief of some injustice of the law, or of its administration in his own particular; but he who is outlawed by general opinion, without the intervention of hostile politics, illegal judgment, or embarrassed circumstances, whether he be innocent or guilty, must undergo all the bitterness of exile, without hope, without pride, without alleviation. This case was mine. Upon what grounds the public founded their opinion, I am not aware; but it was general, and it was decisive. Of me or of mine they knew little, except that I had written what is called poetry, was a nobleman, had married, became a father, and was involved in differences with my wife and her relatives, no one knew why, because the persons complaining refused to state their grievances. The fashionable world was divided into parties, mine consisting of a very small minority: the reasonable world was naturally on the stronger side, which happened to be the lady's, as was most proper and polite. The press was active and scurrilous; and such was the rage of the day, that the unfortunate publication of two copies of verses, rather complimentary than otherwise to the subjects of both, was tortured into a species of crime, or constructive petty treason. I was accused of every monstrous vice by public rumour and private rancour: my name, which had been a knightly or a

noble one since my fathers helped to conquer the kingdom for William the Norman, was tainted. I felt that, if what was whispered, and muttered, and murmured, was true, I was unfit for England; if false, England was unfit for me. I withdrew: but this was not enough. In other countries, in Switzerland, in the shadow of the Alps, and by the blue depth of the lakes, I was pursued and breathed upon by the same blight. I crossed the mountains, but it was the same; so I went a little farther, and settled myself by the waves of the Adriatic, like the stag at bay, who betakes him to the waters.

If I may judge by the statements of the few friends who gathered round me, the outcry of the period to which I allude was beyond all precedent, all parallel, even in those cases where political motives have sharpened slander and doubled enmity. I was advised not to go to the theatres, lest I should be hissed, nor to my duty in parliament, lest I should be insulted by the way; even on the day of my departure, my most intimate friend told me afterwards, that he was under apprehensions of violence from the people who might be assembled at the door of the carriage. However, I was not deterred by these counsels from seeing Kean in his best characters, nor from voting according to my principles; and with regard to the third and last apprehensions of my friends, I could not share in them, not being made acquainted with their extent till some time after I had crossed the Channel. Even if I had been so, I am not of a nature to be much affected by men's anger, though I may feel hurt by their aversion. Against all individual outrage, I could protect or redress myself; and against that of a crowd, I should probably have been enabled to defend myself, with the assistance of others, as has been done on similar occasions.

I retired from the country, perceiving that I was the object of general obloquy; I did not indeed imagine, like Jean Jacques Rousseau, that all mankind was in a conspiracy against me, though I had perhaps as good grounds for such a chimera as ever he had: but I perceived that I had to a great extent become personally obnoxious in England, perhaps through my own fault, but the fact was indisputable; the public in general would hardly have been so much excited against a more popular character, without at least an accusation or a charge of some kind actually expressed or substantiated, for I can hardly conceive that the common and everyday occurrence of a separation between man and wife could in itself produce so great a ferment. I shall say nothing of the usual complaints of "being prejudged," "condemned unheard," "unfairness," "partiality," and so forth, the usual changes rung by parties who have had, or are to have, a trial; but I was a little surprised to find myself condemned without being favoured with the act of accusation, and to perceive in the absence of this portentous charge or charges, whatever it or they were to be, that every possible or impossible crime was rumoured to supply its place, and taken for granted. This could only occur in the case of a person very much disliked, and I knew no remedy, having already used to their extent whatever little powers I might possess of pleasing in society. I had no party in fashion, though I was afterwards told that there was

one—but it was not of my formation, nor did I then know of its existence—none in literature; and in politics I had voted with the Whigs, with precisely that importance which a Whig vote possesses in these Tory days, and with such personal acquaintance with the leaders in both houses as the society in which I lived sanctioned, but without claim or expectation of any thing like friendship from any one, except a few young men of my own age and standing, and a few others more advanced in life, which last it had been my fortune to serve in circumstances of difficulty. This was, in fact, to stand alone: and I recollect, some time after, Madame de Staël said to me in Switzerland, “You should not have warred with the world—it will not do—it is too strong always for any individual: I myself once tried it in early life, but it will not do.” I perfectly acquiesce in the truth of this remark; but the world had done me the honour to begin the war; and assuredly, if peace is only to be obtained by courting and paying tribute to it, I am not qualified to obtain its countenance. I thought, in the words of Campbell,

“Then wed thee to an exiled lot,
And if the world hath loved thee not,
Its absence may be borne.”

I recollect, however, that, having been much hurt by Romilly's conduct (he, having a general retainer for me, had acted as adviser to the adversary, alleging, on being reminded of his retainer, that he had forgotten it, as his clerk had so many), I observed that some of those who were now eagerly laying the axe to my roof-tree, might see their own shaken, and feel a portion of what they had inflicted.—His fell, and crushed him.

I have heard of, and believe, that there are human beings so constituted as to be insensible to injuries; but I believe that the best mode to avoid taking vengeance is to get out of the way of temptation. I hope that I may never have the opportunity, for I am not quite sure that I could resist it, having derived from my mother something of the “*perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*.” I have not sought, and shall not seek it, and perhaps it may never come in my path. I do not in this allude to the party, who might be right or wrong; but to many who made her cause the pretext of their own bitterness. She, indeed, must have long avenged me in her own feelings; for whatever her reasons may have been (and she never adduced them to me at least), she probably neither contemplated nor conceived to what she became the means of conducting the father of her child, and the husband of her choice.

So much for “the general voice of his countrymen:” I will now speak of some in particular.

In the beginning of the year 1817, an article appeared in the Quarterly Review, written, I believe, by Walter Scott, doing great honour to him, and no disgrace to me, though both poetically and personally more than sufficiently favourable to the work and the author of whom it treated. It was written at a time when a selfish man would not,

and a timid one dared not, have said a word in favour of either; it was written by one to whom temporary public opinion had elevated me to the rank of a rival—a proud distinction, and unmerited; but which has not prevented me from feeling as a friend, nor him from more than corresponding to that sentiment. The article in question was written upon the Third Canto of *Childe Harold*; and after many observations, which it would as ill become me to repeat as to forget, concluded with “a hope that I might yet return to England.” How this expression was received in England itself I am not acquainted, but it gave great offence at Rome to the respectable ten or twenty thousand English travellers then and there assembled. I did not visit Rome till some time after, so that I had no opportunity of knowing the fact; but I was informed, long afterwards, that the greatest indignation had been manifested in the enlightened Anglo-circle of that year, which happened to comprise within it—amidst a considerable leaven of Welbeck Street and Devonshire Place, broken loose upon their travels—several really well-born and well-bred families, who did not the less participate in the feeling of the hour. “*Why* should he return to England?” was the general exclamation—I answer *why*? It is a question I have occasionally asked myself, and I never yet could give it a satisfactory reply. I had then no thoughts of returning, and if I have any now, they are of business, and not of pleasure. Amidst the ties that have been dashed to pieces, there are links yet entire, though the chain itself be broken. There are duties, and connections, which may one day require my presence—and I am a father. I have still some friends whom I wish to meet again, and it may be, an enemy. These things, and those minuter details of business, which time accumulates during absence, in every man’s affairs and property, may, and probably will, recall me to England; but I shall return with the same feelings with which I left it, in respect to itself, though altered with regard to individuals, as I have been more or less informed of their conduct since my departure; for it was only a considerable time after it that I was made acquainted with the real facts and full extent of some of their proceedings and language. My friends, like other friends, from conciliatory motives, withheld from me much that they could, and some things which they *should* have unfolded; however, that which is deferred is not lost—but it has been no fault of mine that it has been deferred at all.

I have alluded to what is said to have passed at Rome merely to show that the sentiment which I have described was not confined to the English in England, and as forming part of my answer to the reproach cast upon what has been called my “selfish exile,” and my “voluntary exile.” “Voluntary” it has been; for who would dwell among a people entertaining strong hostility against him? How far it has been “selfish” has been already explained.

I have now arrived at a passage describing me as having vented my “spleen against the lofty-minded and virtuous men,” men “whose virtues few indeed can equal;” meaning, I humbly presume, the notorious triumvirate known by the name of “Lake Poets” in their ag-

gregate capacity, and by Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, when taken singly. I wish to say a word or two upon the virtues of one of those persons, public and private, for reasons which will soon appear.

When I left England in April, 1816, ill in mind, in body, and in circumstances, I took up my residence at Coligny, by the lake of Geneva. The sole companion of my journey was a young physician* who had to make his way in the world, and having seen very little of it, was naturally and laudably desirous of seeing more society than suited my present habits or my past experience. I therefore presented him to those gentlemen of Geneva for whom I had letters of introduction; and having thus seen him in a situation to make his own way, retired for my own part entirely from society, with the exception of one English family, living at about a quarter of a mile's distance from Diodati, and with the further exception of some occasional intercourse with Coppet at the wish of Madame de Staël. The English family to which I allude consisted of two ladies, a gentleman and his son, a boy of a year old.†

One of "*these lofty-minded and virtuous men*," in the words of the Edinburgh Magazine, made, I understand, about this time, or soon after, a tour in Switzerland. On his return to England, he circulated—and for any thing I know, invented—a report, that the gentleman to whom I have alluded and myself were living in promiscuous intercourse with two sisters, "having formed a league of incest" (I quote the words as they were stated to me), and indulged himself on the natural comments upon such a conjunction, which are said to have been repeated publicly, with great complacency, by *another* of that poetical fraternity, of whom I shall say only, that even had the story been true, *he* should not have repeated it, as far as it regarded myself, except in sorrow. The tale itself requires but a word in answer—the ladies were *not* sisters, nor in any degree connected, except by the second marriage of their respective parents, a widower with a widow, both being the offspring of former marriages; neither of them were, in 1816, nineteen years old. "Promiscuous intercourse" could hardly have disgusted the great patron of pantisocracy, (does Mr. Southey remember such a scheme?) but there was none.

How far this man, who, as author of *Wat Tyler*, has been proclaimed by the Lord Chancellor guilty of a treasonable and blasphemous libel, and denounced in the House of Commons, by the upright and able member for Norwich, as a "rancorous renegado," be fit for sitting as a judge upon others, let others judge. He has said that for this expression "he brands William Smith on the forehead as a calumniator," and that "the mark will outlast his epitaph."‡ How long William Smith's epitaph will last, and in what words it will be written, I know not, but William Smith's words form the epitaph itself of Robert Southey. He has written *Wat Tyler*, and taken the office of poet

* Dr. Polidori—author of the "Vampire."

† Mr. and Mrs. Shelley, Miss Clermont, and Master Shelley.

‡ See *post*, Appendix to the "Vision of Judgment," p. 537.

laureate—he has, in the Life of Henry Kirke White, denominated reviewing “the ungentle craft,” and has become a reviewer—he was one of the projectors of a scheme, called “pantisocracy,” for having all things, including women, in common, (*query*, common women?) and he sets up as a moralist—he denounced the battle of Blenheim, and he praised the battle of Waterloo—he loved Mary Wollstoncraft, and he tried to blast the character of her daughter (one of the young females mentioned)—he wrote treason, and serves the king—he was the butt of the Antijacobin, and he is the prop of the Quarterly Review; licking the hands that smote him, eating the bread of his enemies, and internally writhing beneath his own contempt,—he would fain conceal, under anonymous bluster, and a vain endeavour to obtain the esteem of others, after having for ever lost his own, his leprous sense of his own degradation. What is there in such a man to “envy?” Who ever envied the envious? Is it his birth, his name, his fame, or his virtues, that I am to “envy?” I was born of the aristocracy, which he abhorred; and am sprung, by my mother, from the kings who preceded those whom he has hired himself to sing. It cannot, then, be his birth. As a poet, I have, for the past eight years, had nothing to apprehend from a competition; and for the future, “that life to come in every poet’s creed,” it is open to all. I will only remind Mr. Southey, in the words of a critic, who, if still living, would have annihilated Southey’s literary existence now and hereafter, as the sworn foe of charlatans and impostors, from Macpherson downwards, that “those dreams were Settle’s once and Ogilby’s;” and, for my own part, I assure him, that whenever he and his sect are remembered, I shall be proud to be “forgot.” That he is not content with his success as a poet may reasonably be believed—he has been the nine-pin of reviews; the Edinburgh knocked him down, and the Quarterly set him up; the government found him useful in the periodical line, and made a point of recommending his works to purchasers, so that he is occasionally bought (I mean his books, as well as the author), and may be found on the same shelf, if not upon the table, of most of the gentlemen employed in the different offices. With regard to his private virtues, I know nothing—of his principles, I have heard enough. As far as having been, to the best of my power, benevolent to others, I do not fear the comparison; and for the errors of the passions, was Mr. Southey *always* so tranquil and stainless? Did he *never* covet his neighbour’s wife? Did he *never* calumniate his neighbour’s wife’s daughter, the offspring of her he coveted? So much for the apostle of pantisocracy.

Of the “lofty-minded, virtuous” Wordsworth, one anecdote will suffice to speak his sincerity. In a conversation with Mr. ——— upon poetry, he concluded with, “After all, I would not give five shillings for all that Southey has ever written.” Perhaps this calculation might rather show his esteem for five shillings than his low estimate of Dr. Southey; but considering that when he was in his need, and Southey had a shilling, Wordsworth is said to have had generally sixpence out of it, it has an awkward sound in the way of valuation. This anecdote

was told me by persons who, if quoted by name, would prove that its genealogy is poetical as well as true. I can give my authority for this ; and am ready to adduce it also for Mr. Southey's circulation of the falsehood before mentioned.

Of Coleridge, I shall say nothing—*why*, he may divine.*

I have said more of these people than I intended in this place, being somewhat stirred by the remarks which induced me to commence upon the topic. I see nothing in these men as poets, or as individuals—little in their talents, and less in their characters, to prevent honest men from expressing for them considerable contempt, in prose or rhyme, as it may happen. Mr. Southey has the *Quarterly* for his field of rejoinder, and Mr. Wordsworth his postscripts to "*Lyrical Ballads*," where the two great instances of the sublime are taken from himself and Milton. "Over her own sweet voice the stockdove broods;" that is to say, she has the pleasure of listening to herself, in common with Mr. Wordsworth upon most of his public appearances. "What divinity doth hedge" these persons, that we should respect them? Is it Apollo? Are they not of those who called Dryden's Ode "a drunken song?" who have discovered that Gray's Elegy is full of faults (see Coleridge's *Life*, vol. i. note, for Wordsworth's kindness in pointing this out to him), and have published what is allowed to be the very worst prose that ever was written, to prove that Pope was no poet, and that William Wordsworth is?

In other points, are they respectable, or respected? Is it on the open avowal of apostasy, on the patronage of government, that their claim is founded? Who is there who esteems those parricides of their own principles? They are, in fact, well aware that the reward of their change has been any thing but honour. The times have preserved a respect for political consistency, and, even though changeable, honour the unchanged. Look at Moore: it will be long ere Southey meets with such a triumph in London as Moore met with in Dublin, even if the government subscribe for it, and set the money down to secret service. It was not less to the man than to the poet, to the tempted but unshaken patriot, to the not opulent but incorruptible fellow-citizen, that the warm-hearted Irish paid the proudest of tributes. Mr. Southey may applaud himself to the world, but he has his own heartiest contempt; and the fury with which he foams against all who stand in the phalanx which he forsook, is, as William Smith described it, "the rancour of the renegado," the bad language of the prostitute who stands at the corner of the street, and showers her slang upon all, except those who may have bestowed upon her her "little shilling."

Hence his quarterly overflowings, political and literary, in what he has himself termed "the ungentle craft," and his especial wrath against Mr. Leigh Hunt, notwithstanding that Hunt has done more for Wordsworth's reputation, as a poet (such as it is), than all the Lakers could in their interchange of self-praises for the last twenty-five years.

* See MOORE'S *Notices*, vol. i, p. 470.

And here I wish to say a few words on the present state of English poetry. That this is the age of the decline of English poetry will be doubted by few who have calmly considered the subject. That there are men of genius among the present poets makes little against the fact, because it has been well said, that "next to him who forms the taste of his country, the greatest genius is he who corrupts it." No one has ever denied genius to Marino, who corrupted not merely the taste of Italy, but that of all Europe for nearly a century. The great cause of the present deplorable state of English poetry is to be attributed to that absurd and systematic depreciation of Pope, in which, for the last few years, there has been a kind of epidemical concurrence. Men of the most opposite opinions have united upon this topic. Warton and Churchill began it, having borrowed the hint probably from the heroes of the *Dunciad* and their own internal conviction that their proper reputation can be as nothing till the most perfect and harmonious of poets—he who, having no fault, has had REASON made his reproach—was reduced to what they conceived to be his level; but even *they* dared not degrade him below Dryden. Goldsmith, and Rogers, and Campbell, his most successful disciples; and Hayley, who, however feeble, has left one poem "that will not be willingly let die" (the *Triumphs of Temper*), kept up the reputation of that pure and perfect style; and Crabbe, the first of living poets, has almost equalled the master. Then came Darwin, who was put down by a single poem in the *Antijacobin*; * and the *Crusicans*, from Merry to Jerningham, who were annihilated (if *Nothing* can be said to be annihilated) by Gifford, the last of the wholesome satirists.

At the same time Mr. Southey was favouring the public with *Wat Tyler* and *Joan of Arc*, to the great glory of the Drama and Epos. I beg pardon, *Wat Tyler*, with Peter Bell, was still in MS., and it was not till after Mr. Southey had received his Malmsey butt, and Mr. Wordsworth † became qualified to gauge it, that the great revolutionary tragedy came before the public and the Court of Chancery. Wordsworth was peddling his lyrical ballads, and brooding a preface, to be succeeded in due course by a postscript; both couched in such prose as must give peculiar delight to those who have read the prefaces of Pope and Dryden; scarcely less celebrated for the beauty of their prose, than for the charms of their verse. Wordsworth is the reverse of Molière's gentleman who had been "talking prose all his life, without knowing it;" for he thinks that he has been all his

* "The Loves of the Triangles," the joint production of Messrs. Canning and Frere.

† Goldsmith has anticipated the definition of the Lake poetry, as far as such things can be defined. "Gentlemen, the present piece is not of your *common epic poems*, which come from the press like paper kites in summer; there are none of your Turnuses or Didos in it; *it is an historical description of nature*. I only beg you 'll endeavour to make your souls in unison with mine, and hear with the same *enthusiasm with which I have written*." Would not this have made a proper proem to the *Excursion*, and the poet and his pedler? It would have answered perfectly for that purpose, had it not unfortunately been written in good English.

life writing both prose and verse, and neither of what he conceives to be such can be properly said to be either one or the other. Mr. Coleridge, the future *vates*, poet and seer of the Morning Post (an honour also claimed by Mr. Fitzgerald, of the "Rejected Addresses"), who ultimately prophesied the downfall of Buonaparte, to which he himself mainly contributed, by giving him the nickname of "*the Corsican*," was then employed in predicating the damnation of Mr. Pitt, in the two very best copies of verses he ever wrote: to wit, the infernal eclogue of "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter," and the "Ode to the departing Year."

These three personages, Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, had all of them a very natural antipathy to Pope; and I respect them for it, as the only original feeling or principle which they have contrived to preserve. But they have been joined in it by those who have joined them in nothing else: by the Edinburgh Reviewers, by the whole heterogeneous mass of living English poets, excepting Crabbe, Rogers, Gifford, and Campbell, who, both by precept and practice, have proved their adherence; and by me, who have shamefully deviated in practice, but have ever loved and honoured Pope's poetry with my whole soul, and hope to do so till my dying day. I would rather see all I have ever written lining the same trunk in which I actually read the eleventh book of a modern epic poem* at Malta, in 1811 (I opened it to take out a change after the paroxysm of a tertian, in the absence of my servant, and found it lined with the name of the maker, Eyre, Cockspur Street, and with the epic poetry alluded to), than sacrifice what I firmly believe in as the Christianity of English poetry, the poetry of Pope.

But the Edinburgh Reviewers, and the Lakers, and Hunt and his school, and every body else with their school, and even Moore without a school, and dilettanti lecturers at institutions, and elderly gentlemen who translate and imitate, and young ladies who listen and repeat, baronets who draw indifferent frontispieces for bad poets, and noblemen who let them dine with them in the country, the small body of the wits and the great body of the blues, have latterly united in a depreciation, of which their fathers would have been as much ashamed as their children will be. In the mean time, what have we got instead? The Lake school, which begun with an epic poem, "written in six weeks" (so Joan of Arc proclaimed herself), and finished with a ballad composed in twenty years, as "Peter Bell's" creator takes care to inform the few who will enquire. What have we got instead? A deluge of flimsy and unintelligible romances, imitated from Scott and myself, who have both made the best of our bad materials and erroneous system. What have we got instead? Madoc, which is neither an epic nor any thing else; Thalaba, Kehama, Gebir, and such gibberish, written in all metres and in no language. Hunt, who had powers to have made "the Story of Rimini" as perfect as a fable of Dryden, has thought fit to sacrifice his genius and his taste to some

* Sir James Burgess's "Richard I." See vol. ii, p. 352, note 45.

unintelligible notions of Wordsworth, which I defy him to explain. Moore has——But why continue?—All, with the exception of Crabbe, Rogers, and Campbell, who may be considered as having taken their station, will, by the blessing of God, survive their own reputation, without attaining any very extraordinary period of longevity. Of course there must be a still further exception in favour of those who, having never obtained any reputation at all, unless it be among provincial literati, and their own families, have none to lose; and of Moore, who, as the Burns of Ireland, possesses a fame which cannot be lost.

The greater part of the poets mentioned, however, have been able to gather together a few followers. A paper of the *Connoisseur* says, that “it is observed by the French, that a cat, a priest, and an old woman, are sufficient to constitute a religious sect in England.” The same number of animals, with some difference in kind, will suffice for a poetical one. If we take Sir George Beaumont instead of the priest, and Mr. Wordsworth for the old woman, we shall nearly complete the quota required; but I fear that Mr. Southey will but indifferently represent the CAT, having shown himself but too distinctly to be of a species to which that noble creature is peculiarly hostile.

Nevertheless, I will not go so far as Wordsworth in his postscript, who pretends that *no* great poet ever had immediate fame; which being interpreted, means that William Wordsworth is not quite so much read by his cotemporaries as might be desirable. This assertion is as false as it is foolish. Homer’s glory depended upon his present popularity: he recited,—and, without the strongest impression of the moment, who would have gotten the *Iliad* by heart, and given it to tradition? Ennius, Terence, Plautus, Lucretius, Horace, Virgil, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Sappho, Anacreon, Theocritus, all the great poets of antiquity, were the delight of their cotemporaries. The very existence of a poet, previous to the invention of printing, depended upon his present popularity; and how often has it impaired his future fame? Hardly ever. History informs us, that the best have come down to us. The reason is evident; the most popular found the greatest number of transcribers for their MSS., and that the taste of their cotemporaries was corrupt can hardly be avouched by the moderns, the mightiest of whom have but barely approached them. Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso, were all the darlings of the cotemporary reader. Dante’s Poem was celebrated long before his death; and, not long after it, States negotiated for his ashes, and disputed for the sites of the composition of the *Divina Commedia*. Petrarch was crowned in the Capitol. Ariosto was permitted to pass free by the public robber who had read the *Orlando Furioso*. I would not recommend Mr. Wordsworth to try the same experiment with his *Smugglers*. Tasso, notwithstanding the criticisms of the *Cruscani*, would have been crowned in the Capitol, but for his death.

It is easy to prove the immediate popularity of the chief poets of the only modern nation in Europe that has a poetical language, the Italian. In our own, Shakspeare, Spenser, Jonson, Waller, Dryden,

Congreve, Pope, Young, Shenstone, Thomson, Johnson, Goldsmith, Gray, were all as popular in their lives as since. Gray's *Elegy* pleased instantly, and eternally. His *Odes* did not, nor yet do they, please like his *Elegy*. Milton's politics kept him down. But the *Epigram* of Dryden,* and the very sale of his work, in proportion to the less reading time of its publication, prove him to have been honoured by his cotemporaries. I will venture to assert, that the sale of the *Paradise Lost* was greater in the first four years after its publication, than that of "The *Excursion*" in the same number, with the difference of nearly a century and a half between them of time, and of thousands in point of general readers. Notwithstanding Mr. Wordsworth's having pressed Milton into his service as one of those not presently popular, to favour his own purpose of proving that our grandchildren will read *him* (the said William Wordsworth), I would recommend him to begin first with our grandmothers. But he need not be alarmed; he may yet live to see all the envies pass away, as Darwin and Seward, and Hoole, and Hole,† and Hoyle‡ have passed away; but their declension will not be his ascension: he is essentially a bad writer, and all the failures of others can never strengthen him. He may have a sect, but he will never have a public; and his "*audience*" will always be "*few*," without being "*fit*,"—except for Bedlam.

It may be asked, why, having this opinion of the present state of poetry in England, and having had it long, as my friends and others well knew—possessing, or having possessed too, as a writer, the ear of the public for the time being—I have not adopted a different plan in my own compositions, and endeavoured to correct rather than encourage the taste of the day. To this I would answer, that it is easier to perceive the wrong than to pursue the right, and that I have never contemplated the prospect "of filling (with Peter Bell, § see its Preface) permanently a station in the literature of the country." Those who know me best, know this, and that I have been considerably astonished at the temporary success of my works, having flattered no person and no party, and expressed opinions which are not those of the general reader. Could I have anticipated the degree of attention which has been accorded me, assuredly I would have studied more to deserve it. But I have lived in far countries abroad, or in the agitating world at home, which was not favourable to study or reflection; so that almost all I have written has been mere passion,—passion, it is true, of different kinds, but always passion: for in me (if it be not

* The well known lines under Milton's picture,—

"Three poets, in three distant ages born," &c.—E.

† The Rev. Richard Hole. He published in early life, a versification of *Fingal*, and in 1789, "*Arthur, a Poetical Romance*." He died in 1803.—E.

‡ Charles Hoyle, of Trinity College, Cambridge, author of "*Exodus*," an epic in thirteen books.—E.

§ Peter Bell first saw the light in 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception; or rather, to fit it for filling *permanently* a station, however humble, in the literature of my country.—WORDSWORTH, 1819.

an Irishism to say so) my *indifference* was a kind of passion, the result of experience, and not the philosophy of nature. Writing grows a habit, like a woman's gallantry : there are women who have had no intrigue, but few who have had but one only ; so there are millions of men who have never written a book, but few who have written only one. And thus, having written once, I wrote on ; encouraged no doubt by the success of the moment, yet by no means anticipating its duration, and I will venture to say, scarcely even wishing it. But then I did other things besides write, which by no means contributed either to improve my writings or my prosperity.

I have thus expressed publicly upon the poetry of the day the opinion I have long entertained and expressed of it to all who have asked it, and to some who would rather not have heard it : as I told Moore not very long ago, "we are all wrong except Rogers, Crabbe, and Campbell." Without being old in years, I am old in days, and do not feel the adequate spirit within me to attempt a work which should show what I think right in poetry, and must content myself with having denounced what is wrong. There are, I trust, younger spirits rising up in England, who, escaping the contagion which has swept away poetry from our literature, will recall it to their country, such as it once was and may still be.

In the mean time, the best sign of amendment will be repentance, and new and frequent editions of Pope and Dryden.

There will be found as comfortable metaphysics, and ten times more poetry in the "Essay on Man," than in the "Excursion." If you search for passion, where is it to be found stronger than in the epistle from Eloisa to Abelard, or in Palamon and Arcite ? Do you wish for invention, imagination, sublimity, character ? seek them in the Rape of the Lock, the Fables of Dryden, the Ode of Saint Cecilia's Day, and Absalom and Achitophel : you will discover in these two poets only, *all* for which you must ransack innumerable metres, and God only knows how many *writers* of the day, without finding a tittle of the same qualities,—with the addition, too, of wit, of which the latter have none. I have not, however, forgotten Thomas Brown the Younger, nor the Fudge Family,* nor Whistlecraft ; but that is not wit—it is humour. I will say nothing of the harmony of Pope and Dryden in comparison, for there is not a living poet (except Rogers, Gifford, Campbell, and Crabbe,) who can write an heroic couplet. The fact is, that the exquisite beauty of their versification has withdrawn the public attention from their other excellences, as the vulgar eye will rest more upon the splendour of the uniform than the quality of the troops. It is this very harmony, particularly in Pope, which has raised the vulgar and atrocious cant against him :—because his versification is perfect, it is his only perfection ; because his truths are so clear, it is asserted that he has no invention ; and because he is always intelligible, it is taken for granted that he has no genius. We are

* In 1812, Moore published "The Two-penny Post-bag, by Thomas Brown the Younger," and in 1818, "The Fudge Family in Paris."—E.

sneeringly told that he is the "Poet of Reason," as if this was a reason for his being no poet. Taking passage for passage, I will undertake to cite more lines teeming with *imagination* from Pope than from any *two* living poets, be they who they may. To take an instance at random from a species of composition not very favourable to imagination—Satire: set down the character of Sporus, with all the wonderful play of fancy which is scattered over it, and place by its side an equal number of verses, from any two existing poets, of the same power and the same variety—where will you find them?

I merely mention one instance of many, in reply to the injustice done to the memory of him who harmonised our poetical language. The attorneys' clerks, and other self-educated genii, found it easier to distort themselves to the new models, than to toil after the symmetry of him who had enchanted their fathers. They were besides smitten by being told that the new school were to revive the language of Queen Elizabeth, the true English; as every body in the reign of Queen Anne wrote no better than French, by a species of literary treason.

Blank verse, which, unless in the drama, no one except Milton ever wrote who could rhyme, became the order of the day,—or else such rhyme as looked still blanker than the verse without it. I am aware that Johnson has said, after some hesitation, that he could not "prevail upon himself to wish that Milton had been a rhymers." The opinions of that truly great man, whom it is also the present fashion to decry, will ever be received by me with that deference which time will restore to him from all; but, with all humility, I am not persuaded that the *Paradise Lost* would not have been more nobly conveyed to posterity, not perhaps in heroic couplets, although even *they* could sustain the subject if well balanced, but in the stanza of Spenser or of Tasso, or in the terza rima of Dante, which the powers of Milton could easily have grafted on our language. The *Seasons* of Thomson would have been better in rhyme, although still inferior to his *Castle of Indolence*; and Mr. Southey's *Joan of Arc* no worse, although it might have taken up six months instead of weeks in the composition. I recommend also to the lovers of lyrics the perusal of the present laureate's *Odes* by the side of Dryden's on Saint Cecilia, but let him be sure to read *first* those of Mr. Southey.

To the heaven-born genii and inspired young scriveners of the day much of this will appear paradox: it will appear so even to the higher order of our critics; but it was a truism twenty years ago, and it will be a re-acknowledged truth in ten more. In the mean time, I will conclude with two quotations, both intended for some of my old classical friends who have still enough of Cambridge about them to think themselves honoured by having had John Dryden as a predecessor in their college, and to recollect that their earliest English poetical pleasures were drawn from the "little nightingale" of Twickenham. The first is from the notes to the Poem of the "Friends."*

* Written by Lord Byron's early friend, the Rev. Francis Hodgson.

“It is only within the last twenty or thirty years that those notable discoveries in criticism have been made which have taught our recent versifiers to undervalue this energetic, melodious, and moral poet. The consequences of this want of due esteem for a writer whom the good sense of our predecessors had raised to his proper station, have been NUMEROUS AND DEGRADING ENOUGH. This is not the place to enter into the subject, even as far as it *affects our poetical numbers alone*, and there is matter of more importance that requires present reflection.”

The second is from the volume of a young person learning to write poetry, and beginning by teaching the art. Hear him :

“But ye were dead
To things ye knew not of—were closely wed
To musty laws lined out with wretched rule
And compass vile ; so that ye taught a school *
Of *dolts* to *smooth*, *inlay*, and *chip*, and *fit*,
Till, like the certain wands of Jacob’s wit,
Their verses tallied. Easy was the task
A thousand handicraftsmen wore the mask
Of poesy. Ill-fated, impious race,
That blasphemed the bright lyrist to his face,
And did not know it ; no, they went about,
Holding a poor *decrepit* standard out
Mark’d with most flimsy mottos, and in large
The name of *one* Boileau !”

A little before, the manner of Pope is termed,

“A *scism*,†
Nurtured by *foppery* and barbarism,
Made great Apollo blush for this his land.” ‡

* It was at least a *grammar* “school.”

† So spelt by the author.

‡ As a balance to these lines, and to the sense and sentiment of the new school, I will put down a passage or two from Pope’s *earliest* poems, taken at random :—

—“Envy her own snakes shall feel,
And Persecution mourn her broken wheel,
There Faction roar, Rebellion bite her chain,
And gasping Furies thirst for blood in vain.”

“Ah ! what avails his glossy varying dyes,
His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes ;
The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold.”

“Round broken columns clasping ivy twined,
O’er heaps of ruin stalk’d the stately hind ;
The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,
And savage howlings fill the sacred quires.”

“Hail, bards triumphant ! born in happier days ;
Immortal heirs of universal praise !
Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow ;
Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
And worlds applaud that must not yet be found !
Oh may some spark of your celestial fire,
The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,

I thought "*foppery*," was a consequence of *refinement* ; but *n'importe*.

The above will suffice to show the notions entertained by the new performers on the English lyre of him who made it most tuneable, and the great improvements of their own "*variazioni*."

The writer of this is a tadpole of the Lakes, a young disciple of the six or seven new schools, in which he has learnt to write such lines and such sentiments as the above. He says "easy was the task" of imitating Pope, or it may be of equalling him, I presume. I recommend him to try before he is so positive on the subject, and then compare what he will have *then* written and what he has *now* written with the humblest and earliest compositions of Pope, produced in years still more youthful than those of Mr. Keats when he invented his new "*Essay on Criticism*," entitled "*Sleep and Poetry*" (an ominous title), from whence the above canons are taken. Pope's was written at nineteen, and published at twenty-two.

Such are the triumphs of the new schools, and such their scholars. The disciples of Pope were Johnson, Goldsmith, Rogers, Campbell, Crabbe, Gifford, Matthias,* Hayley, and the author of the *Paradise of Coquettes*;† to whom may be added Richards, Heber, Wrangham, Bland, Hodgson, Merivale, and others who have not had their full fame, because "the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," and because there is a fortune in fame as in all other

(That on weak wings, from far pursues your flights ;
Glow while he reads, but trembles as he writes),
To teach vain wits a science little known,
T' admire superior sense, and doubt their own ! "

" Amphion there the loud creating lyre
Strikes, and behold a sudden Thebes aspire !
Cithæron's echoes answer to his call,
And half the mountain rolls into a wall."

" So Zembla's rocks, the beauteous work of frost,
Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast ;
Pale suns, unfelt, at distance roll away,
And on th' impassive ice the lightnings play ;
Eternal snows the growing mass supply,
Till the bright mountains prop the incumbent sky,
As Atlas fix'd, each hoary pile appears,
The gather'd winter of a thousand years.

" Thus, when we view some well-proportion'd dome,
The world's just wonder, and even thine, O Rome !
No single parts unequally surprise,
All comes united to th' admiring eyes :
No monstrous height, or breadth, or length appear ;
The whole at once is bold and regular."

A thousand similar passages crowd upon me, all composed by Pope before his *two-and-twentieth* year ; and yet it is contended that he is no poet, and we are told so in such lines as I beg the reader to compare with these *youthful* verses of the "no poet." Must we repeat the question of Johnson, "*If Pope is not a poet, where is poetry to be found ?*" Even in *descriptive* poetry, the *lowest* department of the art, he will be found, on a fair examination, to surpass any living writer.

* Thomas James Matthias, Esq., the well-known author of the *Pursuits of Literature*, *Imperial Epistle to Kien Long*, &c.

† Dr. Thomas Brown, professor of moral philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, who died in 1820.

things. Now, of *all* the new schools—I say *all*, for, “like Legio, they are many”—has there appeared a single scholar who has not made his master ashamed of him? unless it be Sotheby, who has imitated every body, and occasionally surpassed his models. Scott found peculiar favour and imitation among the fair sex: there was Miss Holford,* and Miss Mitford,† and Miss Francis;‡ but, with the greatest respect be it spoken, none of his imitators did much honour to the original, except Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd, until the appearance of “The Bridal of Triermain,” and “Harold the Dauntless,” which in the opinion of some equalled if not surpassed him; and lo! after three or four years they turned out to be the Master’s own compositions. Have Southey, or Coleridge, or t’other fellow, made a follower of renown? Wilson never did well till he set up for himself in the “City of the Plague.” Has Moore, or any other living writer of reputation, had a tolerable imitator, or rather disciple? Now, it is remarkable, that almost all the followers of Pope, whom I have named, have produced beautiful and standard works; and it was not the number of his imitators who finally hurt his fame, but the despair of imitation, and the *ease* of *not* imitating him sufficiently. This, and the same reason which induced the Athenian burgher to vote for the banishment of Aristides, “because he was tired of always hearing him called *the Just*,” have produced the temporary exile of Pope from the State of Literature. But the term of his ostracism will expire, and the sooner the better, not for him, but for those who banished him, and for the coming generation, who

“Will blush to find their fathers were his foes.”

I will now return to the writer of the article which has drawn forth these remarks, whom I honestly take to be John Wilson, a man of great powers and acquirements, well known to the public as the author of the “City of the Plague,” “Isle of Palms,” and other productions. I take the liberty of naming him, by the same species of courtesy which has induced him to designate me as the author of Don Juan. Upon the score of the Lake Poets, he may perhaps recall to mind that I merely express an opinion long ago entertained and specified in a letter to Mr. James Hogg,§ which he the said James Hogg, some—

* Author of “Wallace, or the Fight of Falkirk,” “Margaret of Anjou,” and other poems.

† Miss Mary Russel Mitford, author of “Christina, or the Maid of the South Seas,” “Wallington Hall,” “Our Village,” &c. &c.

‡ Miss Eliza Francis published, in 1815, “Sir Willibert de Waverley; or, the Bridal Eve.”

§ “Oh! I have had the most amusing letter from Hogg, the Ettrick minstrel and shepherd. He wants me to recommend him to Murray; and, speaking of his present bookseller, whose ‘bills’ are never ‘lifted,’ he adds, *totidem verbis*, ‘God d—n him, and them both.’ I laughed, and so would you too, at the way in which this execration is introduced. The said Hogg is a strange being, but of great, though uncouth, powers. I think very highly of him as a poet; but he, and half of these Scotch and Lake troubadours are spoilt by living in little circles and petty societies.”

—B. Letters.

what contrary to the law of pens, showed to Mr. John Wilson, in the year 1814, as he himself informed me in his answer, telling me by way of apology that "he 'd be be d——d if he could help it;" and I am not conscious of any thing like "envy" or "exacerbation" at this moment which induces me to think better or worse of Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge as poets than I do now, although I do know one or two things more which have added to my contempt for them as individuals. And, in return for Mr. Wilson's invective, I shall content myself with asking one question: Did he never compose, recite, or sing any parody or parodies upon the Psalms (of what nature this deponent saith not), in certain jovial meetings of the youth of Edinburgh?* It is not that I think any great harm if he did; because it seems to me that all depends upon the intention of such a parody. If it be meant to throw ridicule on the sacred original, it is a sin; if it be intended to burlesque the profane subject, or to inculcate a moral truth, it is none. If it were, the *unbelievers' Creed*, the many political parodies of various parts of the Scriptures and liturgy, particularly a celebrated one of the Lord's Prayer, and the beautiful moral parable in favour of toleration by Franklin, which has often been taken for a real extract from Genesis, would all be sins of a damning nature. But I wish to know if Mr. Wilson ever has done this, and *if he has, why he* should be so very angry with similar portions of Don Juan?—Did no "parody profane" appear in any of the earlier numbers of Blackwood's Magazine?

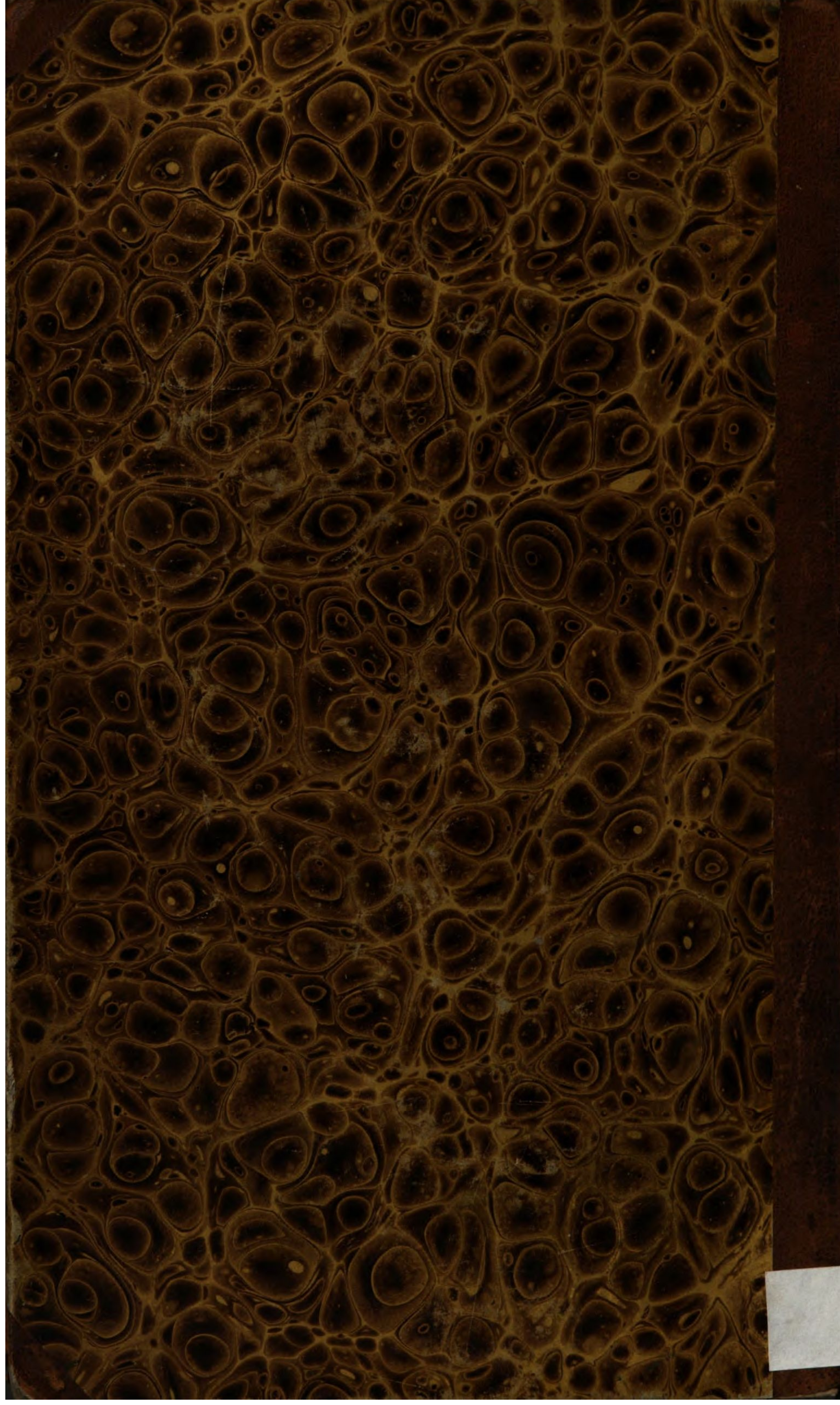
I will now conclude this long answer to a short article, repenting of having said so much in my own defence, and so little on the "crying, left-hand fallings off and national defections" of the poetry of the present day. Having said this, I can hardly be expected to defend Don Juan, or any other "*living*" poetry, and shall not make the attempt. And although I do not think that Mr. John Wilson has in this instance treated me with candour or consideration, I trust that the tone I have used in speaking of him personally will prove that I bear him as little malice as I really believe at the *bottom of his heart* he bears towards me; but the duties of an editor, like those of a tax-gatherer, are paramount and peremptory.† I have done.

BYRON.

* The allusion here is to some now forgotten calumnies which had been circulated by the radical press, at the time when Mr. Wilson was a candidate for the Chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh.—E.

† The reader will find, on reference to the *Notices of Lord Byron's Life*, vol. ii, p. 158, that his lordship was not less mistaken in attributing the Remarks on Don Juan in the Edinburgh Magazine to Professor Wilson, than in supposing Dr. Chalmers to have been the "Presbyter Anglicanus" who criticised his Beppo in the same journal.—E.





Byron, George Gordon Byron

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